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SUZANNE PELTASON

PARTNER AND PARTICIPANT:  
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA  
CHANCELLOR'S AND PRESIDENT'S WIFE  
1984-1995

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University History Series

Suzanne Toll Peltason

PARTNER AND PARTICIPANT :  
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA CHANCELLOR'S AND PRESIDENT'S WIFE  
1984-1995

With an Introduction by  
Rita Atkinson

An Interview Conducted by  
Ann Lage  
in 1999

Since 1954 the Regional Oral History Office has been interviewing leading participants in or well-placed witnesses to major events in the development of northern California, the West, and the nation. Oral history is a method of collecting historical information through tape-recorded interviews between a narrator with firsthand knowledge of historically significant events and a well-informed interviewer, with the goal of preserving substantive additions to the historical record. The tape recording is transcribed, lightly edited for continuity and clarity, and reviewed by the interviewee. The corrected manuscript is indexed, bound with photographs and illustrative materials, and placed in The Bancroft Library at the University of California, Berkeley, and in other research collections for scholarly use. Because it is primary material, oral history is not intended to present the final, verified, or complete narrative of events. It is a spoken account, offered by the interviewee in response to questioning, and as such it is reflective, partisan, deeply involved, and irreplaceable.

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Suzanne and Jack Peltason, inauguration dinner, UCI, March 14, 1985.



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Introduction by Rita Atkinson, wife of UC President

Interviewed 1999 by Ann Lage for the University History Series, Regional Oral History Office, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.



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## INTRODUCTION by Rita Atkinson

Suzanne Peltason has devoted a lifetime to higher education, as you will see in reading her oral history. Whether her husband was a young faculty member, a university chancellor, the president of a national educational organization, or the president of a major university system, she fulfilled her responsibilities with great energy and enthusiasm. She was totally committed to the demands of each job and never held back or took an easier path. She was also a devoted mother and, later, grandmother. How she managed to combine both sets of responsibilities so skillfully is a source of amazement.

I have always admired Suzie for her boundless energy, enthusiasm, friendliness, sense of humor, and unpretentious nature. She was fun to be with. She liked people and could talk happily with anyone, making them feel at ease. As Jack once commented, it is remarkable that someone raised an orphan could turn out so happy, capable, and well adjusted!

Suzie always carried through with the job at hand, regardless of how she might be feeling at the moment. I recall the time when Jack, as the president of the University of California, came to UC San Diego with Suzie to dedicate the new addition to the Central Library (now called the Geisel Library). The ceremony turned out to be a wretched ordeal for all involved. Because it was held outdoors, the students who were protesting a proposed fee increase by the Board of Regents had easy access. The protesters weren't many, but they were loud and obnoxious, making it impossible for any of the speakers to be heard. (The only speaker for whom they quieted was a Native American poet who read a Navajo prayer.) Before leaving for the ceremony, Suzie asked me for a couple of aspirin. It wasn't until afterward that I learned she had been suffering from a migraine headache all day! She was never one to complain.

I first met Suzie in Washington, D. C., in 1976 when Jack was president of the American Council on Education. She showed me through their house in Georgetown and talked about her family and Jack's job in Washington. However, I did not get to know her well until 1984 when Jack became chancellor at UC Irvine. My husband was the chancellor at UC San Diego at that time. The chancellors' wives from all the UC campuses (there were no female chancellors then) got together often to share experiences and problems. Suzie was a role model for me. She was skillful at her job as chancellor's wife and offered helpful advice.

When Suzie called to invite me to have lunch with her and look over Blake House shortly after my husband was appointed president I recall saying, "Well, I hope it is in better shape than University House" (the chancellor's residence at UCSD where we lived and were coping with such problems as a leaking roof and defunct kitchen). There was a long pause before Suzie replied, "Well, Blake House does have a few problems." I didn't realize until later how many problems Blake House did have, and how many inconveniences Suzie had endured.

Jack became president of UC during difficult times. The budget was tight, and the public was highly critical of expenditures made by the previous president. So Jack was

unwilling to spend any money on the house, even though repairs were badly needed. Suzie coped with it all—leaking walls and ceilings, rivers that ran into the garage and flooded the main electrical power box, an alarm system that worked erratically, and tons of junk left by former occupants that took weeks to sort through and dispose of.

After Jack and Suzie moved out in the summer of 1995, it took almost nine months for the university to complete the structural repairs needed to make the house leak-proof and livable. I've always regretted that Suzie did not live in the house with as much comfort as Dick and I have enjoyed. But it was her nature not to complain and to devote her energy to the things she could change.

Despite the lack of funds, Suzie applied her decorator's talents toward making Blake House attractive and comfortable. Every day I find myself grateful for some touch she added. And in the bottom drawer of my desk at Blake House she left two cartoons that still cause me to chuckle. One has Lucy saying to Linus, "Every time there's a good suggestion, someone brings up the budget." The other shows two women cleaning up a gigantic mess left around a conference table. One says to the other, "The tumult and the shouting dies; the captains and the kings depart."

Suzanne Peltason may not have been a captain or a king, but she exerted a tremendous influence on her family, her friends, and the educational institutions with which she was associated over her lifetime. I know that historians of the university, as well as those of us who have known and admired Suzie for many years, will enjoy reading the oral history of this remarkable woman.

Rita Atkinson

Kensington, California  
March 21, 2002



## INTERVIEW HISTORY by Ann Lage

In the course of interviewing Jack Peltason, president emeritus of the University of California, he frequently spoke about his wife, Suzie, and her contributions to his many roles in the world of higher education. We knew that recording the perspective of Suzanne Toll Peltason would add an important dimension to the history of university life and governance. It would contribute to the literature on the role of wives of university presidents and chancellors. Suzanne Peltason agreed to participate, after initial misgivings, and we met for two interview sessions in May and November, 1999.

At our first session, at the Peltason home in Irvine, Mrs. Peltason spoke of family and personal background, meeting Jack at the University of Missouri, and her life as a young wife and mother at Smith College, the University of Illinois, and UC Irvine during its first years. She discussed the steep learning curve and many personal adjustments required of a young woman, orphaned at an early age and raised without a role model for wife, homemaker, and motherhood, let alone for her evolving duties as helpmate to a university administrator. She spoke frankly of her acceptance, in those prefeminist years, of the traditional woman's role and her response to the challenging views expressed in *The Feminist Mystique* and to the growing interest among wives of university administrators for acknowledgment of their unofficial but essential roles.

Our second session, in Oakland at the home of her daughter, Nancy, focused on the years as chancellor's wife at UCI, now accorded official recognition as associate of the chancellor, and as president's wife living in Blake House in Kensington, just north of Berkeley. She discussed the trials and tribulations of entertaining, the role of the chancellorial couple as fundraisers, and the genesis of the book, *UCI: The First 25 Years* (which despite her modest disclaimers was created by virtue of her vision and creative work.) She offered thoughtful reflections on the personal demands of an unsought-after public life, friendships gained and lost in the course of her university duties, and the endless media scrutiny of the presidency during the Peltason years.

The interviews were transcribed and edited in the oral history office. Editor Esther Ehrlich removed repetitions and made some of our mutually meandering conversational language more understandable before sending the transcript to Mrs. Peltason for her review. Mrs. Peltason provided clarifications where needed, sometimes rewriting sections for greater precision. In the end, we have a transcript which makes better sense on the written page but still retains the flavor of the spoken language. (As she commented in a typically self-deprecatingly manner, "It sounds exactly like me, which is the worst news possible.")

Rita Atkinson, Suzanne Peltason's colleague as chancellor's associate and her successor at Blake House, wrote the introduction to the oral history. We thank her for her gracious contribution. We also want to thank President Atkinson and Vice President C. Judson King for their understanding of the importance of documenting the history of the University of California and their support for university history projects, including this oral history.

The Regional Oral History Office was established in 1954 to augment through tape-recorded memoirs the Library's materials on the history of California and the West. One of its major areas of investigation has been the history of the University of California; a listing of oral history interviews in the University History Series follows the appendix. Copies of all interviews are available for research use in The Bancroft Library and in the UCLA Department of Special Collections. The office is under the direction of Richard Cándida Smith and the administrative direction of Charles B. Faulhaber, James D. Hart Director of The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

Ann Lage, Interviewer  
Regional Oral History Office

Berkeley, California  
March, 2002

Regional Oral History Office  
Room 486 The Bancroft Library

University of California  
Berkeley, California 94720

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

(Please write clearly. Use black ink.)

Your full name Dyanne Toll Peltason  
 Date of birth July 29, 1925 Birthplace Santa Barbara, California  
 Father's full name Alfred Toll II - 11/11/89 - 3/5/36  
 Occupation Hardware merchant Birthplace Kansas City, Missouri  
 Mother's full name Natalie Elise More 7/30/96 - 7/20/27.  
 Occupation Homemaker Birthplace Santa Barbara, California  
 Your spouse/partner Jack Walter Peltason 8/29/23.  
 Occupation Political Scientist & Educational Administrator Birthplace St. Louis, Missouri  
 Your children Nancy - 9/25/47 Timothy 1/19/51  
Jill 3/1/62  
 Where did you grow up? K.C. Missouri, Denver, Colorado, Valle Crucis, North Carolina, Madison New Jersey  
 Present community Irvine, California  
 Education B.A. University of Missouri - 1945  
major in Philosophy  
 Occupation(s) Homemaker for the family, and hostess for  
U.I. (1967-77), U.C.I. (1984-92) and U.C. Also ACE - 1977-1984  
 Areas of expertise (42-95)

Other interests or activities Keeping photo journals of our trips  
on the computer, and attempting to keep everyone in the  
family connected - "keeper of the family flame"

Organizations in which you are active on Board of Contributors, Irvine,  
Faculty & Associates,

SIGNATURE Dyanne Peltason

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_



## INTERVIEW WITH SUZANNE PELTASON

**I FAMILY BACKGROUND, AN UNSETTLED CHILDHOOD, YOUNG ADULT YEARS, 1925-1951**[Interview 1: May 26, 1999] ##<sup>1</sup>**Family Origins**

Lage: You have been at so many universities that we have a lot to discuss, but we're going to go chronologically and emphasize UC the most.

S. Peltason: But this is just an adjunct to Jack's memories, just from my perspective?

Lage: Your perspective and also your comments on your role as faculty wife, dean's wife, chancellor's wife, president's wife. I don't want to leave out your interests altogether either.

S. Peltason: I don't have much in the way of interests.

Lage: Why don't you give a brief summary of your early life? I know you were born in California.

S. Peltason: Yes, I was. I'm an eighth generation Californian. My great, great, great, great, great grandfather was Francisco Ortega, who was with the Portola Party at San Francisco Bay in 1769. According to my family historian,<sup>2</sup> he was the "official" discoverer of the Golden Gate. But as I put it in my book<sup>3</sup>, Francis Drake would have seen it from the sea and the Indians, of course, would have been living there for years, so this is kind of an arrogant interpretation.

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<sup>1</sup>## This symbol indicates that a tape or tape segment has begun or ended. A guide to the tapes follows the transcript.

<sup>2</sup> Thomas More Storke, *California Editor* (Los Angeles: Westernlore Press, 1958).

<sup>3</sup> Suzanne Peltason, foreword to *UCI: The First 25 Years* (California: The Regents of the University of California, 1992).

Anyway, my father's first wife had died either in the typhoid or flu epidemic of 1919, and she left her husband and a three-year-old daughter who was in frail health. The doctor recommended that the child be taken away from the severe plains winter, so Daddy took her to Santa Barbara in 1919 or 1920, and his mother went with him to help care for her.

Lage: Where did he come from?

S. Peltason: His name was Alfred Toll, and he was from Kansas City, Missouri; that's where he and his first wife had lived. The Toll family business was a lumber company, established by my great grandfather, and I think my father had several altercations with his father about how to run the business. He was in the business only sporadically, though he and his father tried several times to patch things up. He was the only son, and family hopes were pinned on him to continue the business, and he was an alcoholic. My sister says that probably started when he was at Harvard. His roommate in college, Nathaniel Woodworth ["Woody"] Hopkins, also became an alcoholic. They were both from wealthy families, and their "college partying" just became a way of life.

Daddy and Woody graduated from Harvard in June, 1911. Daddy married Ethel Bailey in July of that year, and their daughter, Laura Kemper, was born in 1915. His sister, my Aunt Emily, graduated from Wellesley in 1913, and married Woody in 1914. They also lived in Kansas City, and their daughter, Grace Kemper, was born in January, 1916. The two families were extremely close during those years. When World War I broke out, Woody served in the infantry in France and my father joined the navy. When they returned they were no longer "social drinkers"; they were confirmed alcoholics. There were many other reasons, I suppose, but I never heard what they were.

When a warm climate was prescribed for Laura Kemper's health, Daddy took her to Santa Barbara and his mother went along to help care for her. While there he met my mother, Natalie Elise, and when spring came, his mother returned to Kansas City alone.

Lage: It was your mother who was from the Ortega family?

S. Peltason: That's right.

Lage: Was that her name still?

S. Peltason: No, her name was More. Her mother died when she was four years old, and she was raised by her sister, Suzanne. She was a first cousin of Thomas More Storke. Her father, Thomas Roman More, and Tom Storke's mother, Martha More [Storke], were brother and sister.

Tom Storke is a fascinating and important figure in the history of Santa Barbara, as well as the State of California. For more than fifty years, he was the publisher of the *Santa Barbara News Press* and was a lifelong political activist. A close friend of governors and politicians, he was a California delegate to five national conventions of the Democratic party. He even served in the U.S. Senate for two months to fill William McAdoo's unfinished term of office. He was a Stanford man but was also an enthusiastic supporter of UCSB [University of California, Santa Barbara], as was his son, Charles A. Storke, for whom Storke Plaza is named. Governor Knight appointed T.M. Storke to the Board of Regents of the University of California in 1955.

My parents were married in Santa Barbara on August 14, 1922, and my brother was born on March 13, 1924. I followed soon after, on July 29, 1925. On the day after I was born, Grace Kemper, Aunt Em's and Uncle Woody's daughter, was killed in a horseback riding accident in Missouri, and Uncle Woody's alcoholism became more and more out of control.

In 1926 came the last of several reconciliations between my father and his father, and my family--my father, mother, older half-sister, brother and I--moved back to Kansas City. Nine days before my second birthday, my mother died. I think that after my mother's death in 1927, my father's alcoholism made him unable to function as the head of a family with three small children, and we were left with various relatives. My brother and I moved in with our parental grandparents, and Aunt Em helped them take care of us. Our older sister, Laura Kemper, went with her mother's family, so we were separated then, and I never saw her much in the next twenty years. We're rather close now. Now that I'm 73 and she's 83 we get together and see each other as much as we can, but we were not close growing up.

Lage: Did your mother become ill?

S. Peltason: She was whittling a little piece of wood, making a whistle for my brother, I think, a penny whistle. Cut her finger and died within forty-eight hours. She went to the hospital, and they amputated her arm but were not able to save her.

Lage: She had--

S. Peltason: Septicemia, "blood poisoning" they called it then. Of course, it was well before penicillin; it wouldn't happen now. You wouldn't die of an infection from a cut on your finger. It was a very sudden death, and I think that was the time when my father was not at all able to keep us as a family himself. That's when we were distributed. She died just two days before my second birthday and also before her birthday, which was the day after mine, so it would have been her thirty-first birthday.

Lage: Did you come back at all to your mother's relatives?

S. Peltason: Since she had died so soon after they had moved back, my father's family really never--I mean they met her and knew her and played bridge with her a few times, but never

asked about her family or anything. I didn't even know her maiden name. My older sister was just twelve when my mother died, and she didn't remember much.

Until Jack was at UC Irvine the first time, I don't think I even knew her maiden name. I went up to Santa Barbara on a visit one time, and I went to the courthouse. She was buried in Kansas City, and I got her dates from her tombstone. I went and got her death certificate. Or maybe I found her maiden name on my birth certificate; I don't remember how I found out. Anyway, I never tried to find out anything more about it until the sixties.

Just on a chance, I stopped by the Santa Barbara Historical Society and said, "My mother's name was Natalie More. That's all I know about her." Maybe I had her birth certificate by then, that her father was Thomas More and mother was Mary Den. They said, "Oh, of course, More is a very well-known family," and they had all the papers. So that was really fun, because they said, "Oh, the publisher of the newspaper here would have been her first cousin, Thomas More Storke." He was interested in his forebears, so he had a man who worked at the *Santa Barbara News Press* named Walker Tompkins research the family.

Walker Tompkins had written many books on California history and had gone heavy on the More and the Den families because that was also his boss's family. Because of that, they just sent me to the book shop, and I bought all these books. It was a fascinating and rather glamorous part of California history, when it was Mexico. Of course, it was Alta California and Baja California. It was well before statehood that the family-- The interesting thing is that I was actually the fifth generation born in the same town of Goleta.

Lage: In Goleta, right where the UC Santa Barbara campus is.

S. Peltason: Yes, and they owned that land.

Lage: Your family owned that?

S. Peltason: Yes, all the land that the campus is now on. I don't remember what the name of the holding was. It's in all those books.

Lage: It seems strange that when your mother died there wasn't communication with her family out in California.

S. Peltason: Well, she had been orphaned. Her mother died when she was four years old, and she had been brought up by her older sister, my Aunt Suzanne. I'm named for her sister and my father's sister, Emily. Suzanne Emily. I have just discovered in the last year, I found a cousin--I thought there were just the two girls and that Suzanne brought up Natalie because their parents had died early. It turned out there were seven children in the family, and it's all much more complicated.



So far, I haven't met any other cousins, but I probably have a lot. I think they just sort of lost track--. I mean, Natalie moved east, and her older sister Suzanne never made any attempt to get in touch with me. I tried to get in touch with her once or twice to ask about the family, and she would always just write back, "Well, it's a wonderful family history, and I'll tell you all about it sometime," and then she died before I ever heard the family history from her. People just were busy with their own lives and they just didn't think--.

Lage: And communication was very different.

S. Peltason: Yes, of course people didn't use the telephone. Except when somebody died, or something, you didn't call. My grandmother wrote a lot of letters, but she didn't know anyone connected with my mother's family to have asked.

Then my father did marry again and had another child after that. That was before AA [Alcoholics Anonymous]. I always think that might have helped, because he was a very religious person. His third wife was from Kansas. They were married just a short time. She was a nurse. He was in the hospital having an appendectomy. He was, I guess, a delightful, charming--he was certainly a handsome man. She just fell in love with him, and he proposed to her then. She had no idea that he was an alcoholic, and I think she found out soon thereafter. I don't know that they ever lived together much. I mean, he always ended up back at his parents' doorstep with children and wives and other people. It was very sad. I don't know a lot about it. My family wouldn't talk about it much. But anyway.

### Life with Aunt Em at Valle Crucis, North Carolina

Lage: You didn't have the kind of family upbringing that you provided for your own family.

S. Peltason: No, it was different. I think that I was loved, but I don't think I realized it at the time. It was not a demonstrative family, and then I moved around a good deal. I was with my grandmother and grandfather for a while, and she was acting kind of as my mother. Then I was with my aunt, Aunt Em, who had lost her husband and her daughter.

Aunt Em's 10-year-old daughter was killed on the day after I was born. She kind of took me and my brother on. She was a school teacher. When she wouldn't be able to keep me, I would stay with another aunt. My father had three sisters, and I stayed with all of them at various times. Aunt Em was the head mistress of an Episcopal boarding school in the mountains of North Carolina, and so I was there for maybe four or five years, which is where I must have picked up the accent that I have. People often ask me about it.

When I was teaching Sunday school in Urbana one time, a little boy--the mother, when he came home from school, said, "Who is your Sunday school teacher this year?" He said, "Oh, I can't remember her name, but she's that one that talks kind of country." The mother told me this. [laughter] I said, "Me?" I was just amazed. Since then many people have asked, "Where does the southern part come from?" I think it was that few years in North Carolina.

That was during the Depression--that was '30 to '35 about--when everybody in our family was struggling to hold body and soul together. The church had an orphanage in Madison, New Jersey. The bishop of the diocese had been the minister in the Kansas City church; the church that my grandfather had helped build. Bishop Washburn had performed marriages for several members of my family. He knew about this orphanage in New Jersey and told Aunt Em about it, and so I went there.

Lage: Was this after boarding school?

S. Peltason: I was thirteen, yes, after that time. The time at Valle Crucis was not really a good time. Aunt Em was so busy. For a while my grandmother was there with me, and we shared a room. It must have been terrible for her when she was in her sixties. But anyway, we did. She had high blood pressure, and the altitude--she had to move back to Kansas City. So I was alone. I just had roommates. Most of them were older girls. It was a boarding school for high schoolers, and I was just six or seven years old. I was just living there and living with older children, and Aunt Em really did not-- I mean, I was always supervised well enough. But it was a lonely life, and I think that is where I got used to being a loner. Maybe I would have been a loner anyway, genetically.

Lage: You had to learn to draw on your own resources.

S. Peltason: I think that I would not be as much of a loner as I am if I had not had that experience.

### **The Laura Augusta Home for Girls, New Jersey**

Lage: What was the orphanage like?

S. Peltason: It was called the Laura Augusta Home for Girls, in Madison, New Jersey. It was a beautiful estate, a lovely old house on about fifteen acres with a lake on it and a caretaker's house. And a woman who was the--I started to say the madam. [laughter] A woman who was the head of it.

Lage: Head mistress.

S. Peltason: I didn't call her that, because of course it wasn't a school. We called her Mommy. She was the widow of an Episcopal minister and was a thorough-going Episcopalian. We attended the public school nearby and went to the church nearby, and lived as much like a family as possible. There were eight girls there when I went.

Lage: Well, the fact that you called her Mommy must mean something.

S. Peltason: Yes. We felt really as much like a family as you could feel. We were aware, of course, at school when there was Parents' Day and this day, and that. I mean Mommy came down and came to the plays or did whatever, but we were always the girls up on the hill, the girls from the orphanage.

Lage: In high school.

S. Peltason: The way the high school kids thought of us, yes. I stayed there through the last three years of high school and the first year of college. I took a bus up to Junior College in Morristown, New Jersey. After that I moved back to Kansas City with another aunt and uncle.

Lage: Had you been a good student?

S. Peltason: Medium. I was put ahead much too far. I was thirteen when I moved to New Jersey. Because Aunt Em was such a brilliant person, at the school in North Carolina we started French in grade school, and we started algebra in grade school. When I got to the public school system in New Jersey I had some things like first-year algebra.

Lage: I see, so they pushed you on.

S. Peltason: They put me in as a sophomore when I was thirteen. I was a junior at fourteen, and I graduated when I was fifteen. I was totally, totally ignorant about and innocent of any of the ways of families. I had never lived in a family. I had never lived in a small group; I didn't know how you did that. The orphanage still had to be run kind of institutionally. I mean, there were many of us at meals, and we helped clean it. It was not like a family structure. They made it as much like a family as they could, but girls came and went. There were that many, and some would leave for this reason or that reason, and then others would come in.

So it was a shifting--maybe like a home with a lot of adopted children, although not even that, because there wasn't much stability. Well, that's not right, there was stability. There was stability. There was not intimacy in the same way that would have been in a family with an ongoing history together. But given that the family couldn't support me, I think they did the very best they possibly could.

### More about Valle Crucis

Lage: Was it economics that kept your family from being able to take on a new child?

S. Peltason: Yes, through the thirties they were all struggling.

Lage: What about your brother?

S. Peltason: During the time at Valle Crucis, which was the school in North Carolina, the caretaker, the man who took care of the orchard, and his wife, who was the nurse, lived in a separate house. They had two sons, and Charles lived with them. We all went to the same school, which was the school the mountain children came to.

I had a lot of interesting times there. I went and visited families, I remember, and I'd come back and say, "Can I spend the night with Anna Mae?" "Okay, report to so-and-so when you come in." So I would spend the night with Anna Mae. I remember Anna Mae and Mary Booker; they lived in houses that were built on stilts way up in the hollows of these mountains, and the pigs and the animals would all be under the house. That's where they foraged but also how they were protected from the winter snow, and so forth. I would always come back covered with lice. I would always have to report to that nurse, and she would use kerosene and lard; she would mix that together and squish it all over my head and then scrub it out with this lye soap made there.

The women made soap; they made molasses. They did a lot of things the way the mountain women had been doing them for a long time. The mountain women came in and did the girls' laundry and a lot of other things. But when I think about the patience Aunt Em must have--.

Lage: To let you go?

S. Peltason: To let me come with so much--. The school was a constant battle against vermin of various kinds, mice and rats and roaches. And the girls, it was not like they never had any food in their rooms. Once a year they would hire an exterminator to come and tent the whole thing, I remember. There were bedbugs in the mattresses, lice.

Lage: Where were the girls in the school from? Were they local?

S. Peltason: Since it was advertised by the church, they were mostly from the Southeast, from Tennessee. I remember there were one or two from New York. It had been a school for bad girls, sort of, or wayward girls. I think in those days "wayward" girls were girls who slept with boys when they weren't married. I don't think it was anything like we would think of today.

Lage: They weren't into drugs.

S. Peltason: As far as I know there was no drug use, no crime. Maybe they had done shoplifting or something. I don't think so. I think when it was a church school it was supposed to be for the wild girls. People would think of them as wild girls. When Aunt Em came, actually, she changed that image. They decided in the late twenties that it wasn't going to be for that anymore.

Valle Crucis was always advertised through the church. They were all such dedicated teachers, like it was being run by nuns, or something. Well, not like being run by nuns, from what little I know of the Roman Catholic tradition. The teachers were all dedicated, and they were church women. They were working for a pittance. I think they'd get their room and their board and a few dollars a month. This was the depths of the Depression. They really had remarkable and sophisticated intellects. They taught poetry, literature, math, and philosophy, and so forth. Aunt Em, herself, had been a philosophy major. French and German were taught. Every year the students put on a play. I remember being a messenger in *Iphigenia in Taurus* by Euripides and in the chorus in *The Mikado*.

Lage: So it was an academic program, it seems, despite the school's roots.

S. Peltason: Yes. They taught algebra. Of course we had only rudimentary chemistry labs, so the science they taught had to be very elementary. Physics, too. In those days, in the thirties, I don't believe there was much required. When students graduated, I think a high percentage went on to colleges, but I'm not sure about that.

Lage: It sounds like it was preparation for college.

S. Peltason: Yes, it was supposed to be for college, but since many students were from broken families, I don't know how many were actually able to go to college. I don't know how much the school helped. Now they would be helping them get financial aid.

Lage: Right, and steering them into college.

S. Peltason: Yes. There wasn't much financial aid available.

### **Going to College at the University of Missouri; Meeting and Marrying Jack Peltason**

Lage: What about yourself? Did you start college at the University of Missouri?

S. Peltason: Well, I started freshman year at the junior college in Morristown, New Jersey, when I was still at the orphanage. Then the next year I moved in with another sister of my father's, Aunt Mary Lee and Uncle Paul, who were living in Kansas City. I attended Kansas City Junior College that year while I satisfied the residency requirement for the

University of Missouri. When I went down to the University of Missouri, they sort of said--I would have been seventeen years old, or eighteen at the end of that summer--they said, "Here, we have five hundred dollars and that's all there is. So you finish school on five hundred dollars." And so I did. It was cheap then.

Lage: Your family said that?

S. Peltason: Yes, as a family that was all they could muster between the different--. It was, I guess, free tuition, but of course, I didn't do extras. That was when I met Jack. I met him almost the first week of school when I went to the University of Missouri. We had an intellectual history class. He had "flunked out" of the army and come back.

I remember he had had the crew cut because he had been inducted into the army and then had been in the hospital and flunked his physical. He had been told he was out just in early September. His hair was still so short. That's the way he was when I first met him. I didn't think it looked funny. I mean, a lot of boys had crew cuts then. He was so self-conscious about it. He kept rubbing his hair. I don't know if as a graduate student he usually would have been in an undergraduate class, but we met in intellectual history class.

We met then and started dating that fall. I finished there and stayed the next summer. I lived in a boarding house on campus and went through that year, through the summer, and then graduated in January of '45.

Lage: You graduated very quickly.

S. Peltason: That's right, I was nineteen. Jack was nineteen when he graduated too, so he was twenty when he came back, and I was eighteen that year we met.

Lage: So he was equally young. I hadn't remembered that, or maybe he didn't tell me.

S. Peltason: We were both nineteen when we finished college. He went straight through graduate school in three years, so he got his Ph.D. from Princeton when he was twenty-two.

Lage: Oh, my goodness.

S. Peltason: The year he was nineteen he got a master's at Missouri. He went to Princeton for the Ph.D. the next year. That was normally a three-year program, but he had done one year. Actually, he had to do the same work at Princeton, so he got a second master's from Princeton, which was just on the way. You automatically, in those days, got a master's if you got a Ph.D. You got a master's at the end of your orals and the first residency, and then you wrote a dissertation. Then you got the Ph.D. So he did that actually in two years, but he'd had a year at Missouri.

Lage: From the way he tells the story, it didn't take him long to decide you were the one.

S. Peltason: That's right. He didn't let me know that right away. I didn't. I felt very young and bewildered with each new situation. When I went to the public high school, after being at Valle Crucis and the orphanage, I remember thinking how odd that all the girls carried purses to class. Why would you carry a purse around with you in class? Now, of course, I'm never without it, but I didn't even know that about dressing or about what other people did, how they lived. I was the same way when I went to college. The other students lived in an entirely different world from the way I had lived, all of the girls and boys I met there.

I was always struggling, struggling to try to watch for clues. I was that way as a young married woman, too, and as an administrator's wife. Looking around desperately, how do people do this? How do they bring up children? Which we all do in a way, but I had been more isolated from a regular-- I think the same thing is true of people who live in families in different strata of society. If your family was in one stratum and you move to another, you must always be, "How do they do things here?" You must suddenly see in yourself awkwardnesses when you do something other people think is so strange. I've seen that a good bit as I've gotten older, and I can sympathize.

Now I have been tutoring and helping a Korean family here. They're so charming. All the young people now ask much more. They ask, "How do you do so-and-so? What do you mean when you say so-and-so?" I wouldn't have asked, because I didn't want anybody to realize I didn't know. I think young people today are probably much more sure of themselves. I was so afraid of anything that might show how ignorant I was. I didn't want to parade it, parade my ignorance.

### Life as a Young Faculty Wife at Smith College, 1947-1951

Lage: It seems to me that the stages you've gone through, the graduate student wife, and then the young faculty wife, and then the wife of a dean, everybody would have to be learning along those lines.

S. Peltason: Yes. I was trying to learn how a solitary gets set into a family. Jack and I were married while he was a graduate student. We were married in December, and he graduated that June, but he had finished his dissertation and finished all of his work when we got married and was teaching at Princeton. I got pregnant four days after we were married, about anyway. The baby was born nine months and four days after we were married, in Northampton. She was born on the first day of teaching class.

Lage: At Smith?

S. Peltason: At Smith, and I was still at Princeton because that's where the doctor was. Jack had just moved to Princeton a couple of weeks before. I was still looking for all those

clues then. When he was a young professor at Smith, I still didn't know. The other people knew to say, "Come over and have coffee," or "Come over for dinner." I had never even cooked!

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Lage: Were there particular people at Smith who took you under their wing?

S. Peltason: Yes, particular people I watched. A lot of them have died since then but two, Janet and Dan Aaron. It was a very sophisticated group at Smith. They were politically active, and the women-- it was before Betty Friedan, before the women's movement, although you could see it was coming--they were a liberated bunch there, partly because it was Smith College and there were many women professors. Some wives were professors and some single women, but they were already women who felt that they could do everything. They didn't feel so bound by tradition to stay barefoot in the kitchen, or whatever. But Janet Aaron and Dan were special role models of mine. He was a professor of history and literature. He's at Harvard now.

The Israels in the psychology department, Elsa and Harold Israel, were friends. Bernard and Elinor Barber. He's a sociologist who had an illustrious career at Columbia, and she was a grant person for the Ford Foundation for a long time. I think maybe she's retired now. They live in New York City in an apartment. They were all quintessential easterners and all quite sophisticated.

It was all a brand new experience for both Jack and me; I mean we were middle westerners. When we announced that we were going to go back to Illinois, they were uncomprehending. Here we were, living on twenty-eight hundred dollars a year at Smith. A lot of them had family money anyway, but the people who had two incomes were still not rich. They were making, maybe, six thousand a year, seven thousand or eight thousand if they had been there for a while. But they couldn't understand why you would go to Illinois, the plains and the farms, where nobody knew anything about drama or theater or the arts or music. They thought there weren't any paintings out there in the Middle West. They thought, maybe the West Coast, maybe San Francisco had something to be said for it, but there was this big empty thing from Pennsylvania to--. [laughter]

Lage: Weren't they welcoming to you, this young midwestern couple?

S. Peltason: Yes. I remember a letter Charlie Page sent to introduce us to Bob Biersted, a friend of his in Illinois, and I remember reading in the letter that Bob returned, "We will be sure to take care of your young friends." I remember thinking, "Oh, they went out of their way, in introducing us by letter to someone, just to say how young we were." And we were young; Jack was twenty-five years old and I was twenty-three years old, and we already had a baby, two children by the time we went to Illinois.



Jack was very close in age to the students. I think that we were such innocents in so many ways. Jack was too, although he had lived in a family, and his mother and father had entertained a lot, but if you're the boy--I mean it was always a woman's job. When I'd ask him what the rules were for entertaining, he never knew any. I had known rules about things like how to set the table, and so on.

I wasn't worried about all the forks, because I had had all that. We had very elaborate table settings, both at the orphanage and even at Valle Crucis. I wasn't worried about table manners and that kind of thing but about what kind of food you cooked and when you invited people over.

I remember going to Janet and Dan's house one night and as we went out the door I said, "Can you come to our house next Tuesday?" because I thought that was how you were supposed to do it and being so embarrassed when I later realized that you don't go to a party at somebody's house and then ask them back as you leave. I had just heard that if they have you then you're supposed to have them back. Janet said, "I don't know; I'll have to look at my calendar." She wasn't going to answer me then. That was how I learned that you don't do that. When I think back, there were so many dumb things that I should have known by common sense, but I didn't.

Lage: You didn't have a model. With your child rearing, you must have been in the same position.

S. Peltason: Yes, I was. Now that was a little more instinctive, I think. I must have had easy children, now that I see a couple of my grandchildren and some of the problems that other people are having. But motherhood was a great joy from the beginning, although it came too soon. I wish I had been able to get used to marriage. If I could have gone to Smith and had a year or so that I learned to cook and keep house just for Jack and me. Our first house was three miles out, and I didn't drive. I'd never even been in a car growing up, so it was a really big thing. I'd never sat up in the front seat of a car and watched anybody drive, so it took me longer to learn the mechanics of it. And Jack didn't have much time to teach me.

So I was out in the country, and I was really lonely that first year or so. Then we got an apartment closer to campus, and people stopped in and came by. I began to learn things a little faster and to do a little more. It was an exciting time. I was much more in the college campus. Since the other women were all politically active, I thought the thing you did was the League of Women Voters; of course, we were all Democrats.

Lage: Was politics something you were interested in?

S. Peltason: Sort of. I don't think I was as interested as I thought I was then. I mean, I thought all the causes were so righteous, and my Aunt Em had been a devoted Socialist. She voted for Norman Thomas up until FDR [Franklin Delano Roosevelt] ran, and then she voted for FDR the rest of the times. She had still been fighting for child labor laws.

Not only was suffrage not that far behind us, but child labor and all kinds of really awful injustices, and the unions.

Lage: So she was politically active.

S. Peltason: Yes. She was politically active. She was really a philosopher and literature person but her political views--. I think because of her religion she tried to figure out what Christ would have done, and she decided that what He would have done was get the workers to organize into labor unions. I think her politics were based in her religion, which was an extremely important part of her life, and my grandmother's life too.

But the activities of the wives, that wasn't as hard for me. The social part was difficult, how you behaved. The mothering wasn't as hard, although I did kind of struggle, I don't think more than anybody else, to try to fulfill these duties that I thought were obligatory, and still run the house, and take good care of the children. We had a ten-day-old baby when we arrived at Smith. We went right from the hospital in Princeton and drove up to Northampton. So I was there with that new baby, and then Tim was born three years later.

## II ADMINISTRATOR'S WIFE AT ILLINOIS AND IRVINE, 1951-1984

### Faculty Wife at University of Illinois, 1951-1959: "I Began to Fit in There"

Lage: Then soon after Tim was born, did you go to Illinois?

S. Peltason: We were at Smith four years, so Tim was a nine-month-old baby when we moved to Illinois.

Lage: Did you drive?

S. Peltason: Yes, we did drive. In my nest-building I had heard about bookcases with bricks and boards, and I had gone around to different dumps to pick up bricks. A man was taking apart some foundation somewhere, and I asked if I could have the brick. He says, "Help yourself, little lady!" and he punched me playfully in the stomach! So I said to Jack, "I worked hard to get these bricks. I had this man punch me in the stomach so I could take home the bricks to make a brick and board bookcase." Then I went to a lumberyard and bought the board. I made Jack load them all on the top of the car when we drove to Illinois. It's a wonder we didn't have a hundred blowouts in those days.

Lage: Was Illinois a congenial setting for you?

S. Peltason: Yes, it was. We liked it right away. I began to fit in there, although there were still consummate entertainers whom I still admire, all the Pearl Mestas. It's amazing how many marvelous cooks! We lived there, and we moved into a barracks apartment, barracks left over from the army that had been put there in the enormous explosion of enrollment.

It's just amazing when you think about what the campuses did after World War II for the G.I. bill. It's just incredible. These barracks had all been put up as a result of the G.I. bill and the G.I.s coming back. They were still about half students, mostly, by the time we got there, graduate students and assistant professors. All of us in one barracks. It was enormous, several hundred people in the little section we were in.

Lage: Was Illinois growing, so that there were a lot of new, young professors?

S. Peltason: Yes, after the war every place was growing. The expansion was just enormous. There would be eighty or ninety or a hundred of us a year; we'd come in new.

Lage: Were there organizations then for faculty wives?

S. Peltason: There were the faculty wives' organizations. It was always *de rigueur* for each department chairman's wife to call all of the new faculty wives in her husband's department; it was part of her job. Now, that would be unheard of. The department chairs' wives don't even know--. Well, that's not right. I think the wives of the department chairs now do entertain, especially in connection with recruiting, and they entertain the rest of the faculty at their homes, but they wouldn't think of calling the wives and asking if they could take them to the faculty wives' group. They're all too busy. They're all working full-time. I don't mean to say that the wives don't entertain anymore--they do--but in those days that was one of the things all the wives did. Very few of the wives worked outside the home.

The dean's wife would take care of all the department chairman wives or heads, if there was a new one, and each department chairman's wife would take care of new faculty wives in her husband's department. Some departments would have twenty new people, and she would call them all.

There were gourmet dinner groups and nearly all of us joined. I don't think we called it "gourmet" then, I think we just called it "newcomers' dinner groups," or something, when you'd meet once a month. Many of those groups, when I was back last year, thirty or forty years later, are still going. They still meet, still go to each other's house.

Lage: Those are for couples.

S. Peltason: Yes, the dinner groups for the couples. The wives' events were all teas during the days. We belonged to a co-op for baby-sitting. That was a chore, because there were a few husbands, that was very rare, who helped with the baby-sitting, but mostly all of us wives participated. We would either be out, in which case we were hiring somebody, and then paying; to pay back, you put your hours in.

Lage: So you're either out baby-sitting or out having a baby-sitter. It's interesting that the men just didn't participate that much.

S. Peltason: The baby-sitting at night, there was no earthly reason--. Well, there was an earthly reason in Jack's case, and I guess many of the young men. He would run home and eat lunch, and then he'd run back. And then he would run home and eat dinner, and then

go back to the library. He was writing *Government By the People*<sup>1</sup> the first time then. For all the four years at Smith he did that. Actually he was finishing *Government By the People* when we got to Illinois. We proofread it in the spring of '51. So there wasn't that good a reason; he could have baby-sat. It never occurred to him or to me. He pitied the men who helped with child rearing.

Reading Betty Friedan<sup>2</sup> was a big thing for me, and I remember when I read that thinking, "Yes, this is right. I should have been mad about this. Why have I let him get away with all this stuff? Why am I waiting on him hand and foot?" [laughter]

**On the Changing Role of Women: The Importance of Betty Friedan and *The Feminine Mystique***

S. Peltason: When I first got to Illinois, which was '51, I thought that women were put on this earth to bear children and to cook and to clean, and to see that their husband's shirt was ironed, and not to burden him with my "little complaints." I really thought that women's role was that of the "helpmate," and that was it.

Lage: Even though your Aunt Em had provided a different example?

S. Peltason: Yes, and in her case her child was killed and her husband went off to the army. I mean she wanted to make a home, and she was forced into the labor market as a teacher, and that was acceptable in those days. Teachers and nurses and secretaries and salespeople in stores were women. And then the rare women, I mean we all knew doctors and lawyers, but they were very rare.

Lage: You mentioned some at Smith.

S. Peltason: Many women professors at Smith. I'm trying to remember, with Bernard and Elinor, whether the ones who taught, whether their husbands helped more. Not much. The husbands didn't help much more than the rest of us, but I think a little bit more. I think maybe they were a little more enlightened, but it wouldn't occur to Jack to this day to do anything, and I never--. When I see our children's families--. There's still a holdover of that theory in a lot of people. Biologically, since we have the babies and nurse the babies there is some reason for that connection.

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<sup>1</sup> James MacGregor and Jack W. Peltason, *Government by the People: The Dynamics of American National Government* (New York: Prentice-Hall, 1952).

<sup>2</sup>Betty Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique*, (New York: Norton, 1963)

In those days, Sunday would come, and the men would sit and they'd read the paper, or they would do something else, but I remember thinking that Sunday ought to be different for the women too. Our day went along just the same, with the formula and the babies and the cooking, washing dishes, and nobody helped any more. When they were back at work you would think, "Yes, they've gone to work to make the money, and I stay home. Their job is to be a provider and my job is to--."

Anyway, it was different reading Betty Friedan, and the move was very slow in coming. I think, like most women, I was very uneasy with what then seemed attacks on men. Helping with the housework just was not in their ken; it wasn't really that men were all exploiters. But it wasn't in the women's ken, either. I mean, when I read my grandmother's journal, the way it was in the 1890s, she was a slave, but she didn't see it that way. Her father started a boys' school, now called Kemper Military School, but it was Kemper Family School then. That was my grandmother's father.

There were about forty boys, and his wife did all the cooking for all forty of the boys and all the laundry for all of those boys. I think she had a couple of girls to help with making the beds, but the boys were not expected to help. Of course, boys in the army did make their own beds and did their own washing and stuff but not in schools. It was just the woman's job. She did all that, and she and her husband, the love letters they had written to each other were in Greek. I mean, she even had Greek! She was an educated woman.

Women didn't think of it either, so of course I don't know how we can expect men to think of it. You think they're just going to look over and say, "Oh honey, can I help you with that?" but they aren't going to think that. Some of them will, and some of them won't.

Lage: It doesn't sound like you got the sense of resentment that a lot of women did, or as strongly.

S. Peltason: Not strongly. I didn't have it against Jack, but when I read *The Feminine Mystique*, I started thinking, "This is right. This is all right. We're permitting this to go on. We're making doormats out of ourselves." Every now and then, "All right I'm not going to be a doormat." It must flair up every now and then, still, when I see it. In other parts of the world where you see it, it's terrible. When you think about genital mutilation of African women, and someplace in southern France there was one woman--. I don't exactly get the purpose. I understand it; it's just so they won't enjoy intercourse too much. It's just another example of the subjugation of women, and the circumcision is performed by other women! It's incredible. You do feel a certain anger, all women I think do, about some of the things like that.

Lage: When you brought up your second daughter, who was quite a bit younger, did you socialize her differently?

S. Peltason: I don't think I did anything different. But the peer group is such an important thing in socialization, and I think the peer group did. My two daughters are fourteen years apart, and neither one of them works outside the home.

Lage: But Jill did for a while.

S. Peltason: She was an airline flight attendant for about nine years, but she did that for about four years before marriage. She wasn't married until she was about twenty-five years old and so she had to have something or other. She would have liked not to have a career, but when she finished college and was looking around she sort of had to do something.

Lage: So she wasn't strongly driven.

S. Peltason: She didn't have anything she wanted to do. She wanted to get married, and Nance too. Both just wanted to get married, and have their own homes, and have their own children.

Lage: You were a nice model for them and they wanted to emulate it. When Jill was born, were you in Illinois?

S. Peltason: Yes. She was born in 1962. Jack had become a dean in 1960. That's when it really hit me too. That was a big college. He was dean of LAS [Liberal Arts and Sciences]. It was a big job and a big college, seventeen departments. We were always entertaining then. Jill was born, and he said, "Deans aren't supposed to have babies. Just graduate students are supposed to have babies." Yeah right. It takes two to tango. [laughter] But she was unexpected; her brother was eleven then and her sister was fourteen.

Lage: So you balanced that for a lot of Jack's career.

S. Peltason: Yes. That was hard on her. We were here in Irvine that three years; that was lovely. She was two through five when we were here. That was exciting and a lovely time.

### **The Vice Chancellor's Wife at UC Irvine, 1964-1967**

Lage: What was that like? Let's talk a little bit about watching Irvine come together as a campus.

S. Peltason: Very exciting. I'll have to give you that video called, "The Birth of a Campus <sup>1</sup>." NBC did a program on the day we opened in '65. It was very exciting. We lived over at

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<sup>1</sup>Bob Wright, Dave Bell, and Brad Atwood, "Birth of a Campus: A KNBC Public Affairs Presentation," (Los Angeles: KNBC, October 10, 1965)

Eastbluff. Dan Aldrich had the out-front job, where he had to speak; well, Jack had to speak to the community some, but Dan was the one really making all of the outside connections. The Aldriches did things with the Philharmonic, and they belonged to the boys' club and the girls' club and so forth. It was not yet the years when a chancellor was expected to raise money but to make friends for the university, to try to combat the image that everybody had of "that Berkeley up there," all the communists and everybody else [laughter]. Because this [Orange County] was, of course, the home of the John Birch Society.

One reason Dan was a perfect person for that time was because he was about as true-blue, straight-upstanding as they come. He and Jean didn't drink, were churchgoers, and they were Republicans. They weren't reactionary, of course; they weren't anything like the John Birchers. They seemed to have acceptable politics, and they weren't, I think, very active politically. They both had a very strong social conscience, always did, and Jean still does, but not enough to threaten the Orange County people about how they were going to be wild-eyed radicals or something. I think that was one reason Clark [Kerr] picked him. Dan was great for this job. Jack was the one who hired the faculty. I mean, he was the academic dean.

Lage: He was on the inside. Did you have a role?

S. Peltason: A little bit, but nothing that was prescribed. It was just whatever we wanted. Our living room was about this size over in Eastbluff, and everybody on the faculty could get into that one room, and we frequently did. We had a lot of get-togethers. It was fun that first year. No students, no rules. Every time there had to be a rule we said, "Well, make one up."

Lage: And no institutions like the faculty wives' club?

S. Peltason: Right. Those all got started that year. The Friends of the Library, I think, was the first one. Town and Gown was the second one.

Lage: Did you have a role in some of that?

S. Peltason: A little bit. Jean was the main one they would get in touch with, and then she would always call me, and I would go; a few wives like me and Joan Rowland would pop along. Frosty Gerard was the most activist wife on the faculty. The faculty wives' club was probably started in about '66, then it died in about '70 and restarted in '72, but we were just here from '64 to '67, and that was a lovely time.

Gee, did I cry--I did it privately, I didn't cry to Jack--when Lyle Lanier, who was the provost at Illinois, came through here in the spring of our third year and said, "I just want you to know that at Illinois we're going to the chancellor system, and Dave Henry and I both hope that you will come back." They must not have had quite the same search process then, because in those days the president and the provost could decide whom they wanted. I mean, it was going to go through some formalities, but he



said, "We both hope you'll come back." They officially offered him the job in the fall of 1966.

I knew Jack couldn't turn it down. We had loved Illinois--you know we had been there thirteen years--and we loved it, but I just loved it here. I loved the weather, and Jack did, too. Every morning we would walk out, and it would be December and January, and think "Look, isn't this wonderful?" [laughter]

Lage: You appreciated the climate even more than the native Californians.

S. Peltason: I think probably. And having a little child then--I had brought the other two up with snow suits and shoveling snow and trying to get them out through the ice and snow--but this little one, I'd just throw on a pair of sandals and a sun dress every day, and she was dressed. It was delightful; it was just so much simpler in many ways. It was a lovely three years. If we'd known what was coming at Illinois, I don't know--well, Jack would have done it anyway--but we only had the small hints here. I think Mario Savio probably was at Berkeley already, but the protests hadn't started here in Irvine. We had just enrolled our first class in the fall of 1965.

Lage: '64 was when the Free Speech Movement began.

S. Peltason: Was it '64? So it had been several years, but we didn't feel it quite so strongly at Irvine. Jack wanted to give UCI time to replace him, so he told Illinois he couldn't move there until the fall of '67. When we left in '67, you began to see that things were heating up. People then said, "Oh, it was just the way [UC Berkeley Chancellor Edward] Strong handled it. He didn't handle it very well." Everybody thought it was just Berkeley's problem. I remember Jack said then, "This is not Strong's fault. This is going to happen. This is a movement. This is a whole new thing." Partly because of Vietnam.

**Wife of the Chancellor at University of Illinois, 1967-1977: "The Hard Part Was the Times"**

Lage: What was the Illinois experience like for you? You must have some pretty strong memories.

S. Peltason: It was a good thing. We'd been there thirteen years and had so many good friends. I think it must be very hard for the people who go in as president or chancellor and haven't had a chance to make faculty friends because even with all our friends on the faculty, you do change. All of a sudden you're "they." Even with your oldest friends, in a sense, you're no longer a "we" with them, you're a "they."

- Lage: You don't have anyone to look at to see how they're doing things. You're setting the example.
- S. Peltason: Yes, in that case particularly, because Jack was the first chancellor they had ever had. People had always looked to the president, and they, especially the townspeople, looked beyond Jack all the time to Dave Henry, who had been the president of the campus. They hadn't had a chancellor. If they wanted "the top guy," they always wanted Dave there, instead of Jack. So you had a lot of responsibility making decisions without some of that other authority, but that part wasn't the hardest part. The hard part was just the times.
- Lage: The protests. Did that move you in different directions? Jack mentioned different social, civil rights organizations.
- S. Peltason: Well, yes. There were a lot of sit-ins and a lot of demonstrations. Each ceremony, honors day, commencement day, new student orientation day, became a potential stage for the protestors to get the attention of the media. At every event they'd jump up and you never knew; they might throw a bomb, or were they going to just scream. And they had banners, and they disrupted everything. They thought it was their job--especially the SDS [Students for a Democratic Society] and the Weathermen--saw it as their job to disrupt. They said, "You can't build a new system unless you've torn down the old one," and so forth. They had philosophical justifications for some of these things.
- Lage: They'd react to Jack as the chancellor, saying, "Here comes the guy who is responsible for a lot of this."
- S. Peltason: Right. "He's the one who's doing it."
- ##
- Lage: We were talking about Illinois, and you just said how difficult it was.
- S. Peltason: Yes. I remember one occasion when Jack and all these people were up on the stage, and I could see they had set up a little table next to Jack. I knew that underneath it was a red line, a telephone, for the police to get in touch with him if there suddenly was a bomb scare, or if he had to announce something from the stage. I was sitting fairly near the front, and there was some kind of pause in the ceremonies. All of a sudden, "Ring!" The telephone rang. In these days of cell phones I guess we'd all just assume it was somebody's cell phone. Jack had to kind of grope around under the table, and it was a wrong number. If Jack didn't have such a great sense of humor, I don't know how we ever would have gotten through all those years.
- Lage: Did he weather it well with his sense of humor?

S. Peltason: Yes, he did. He worried, too. He worried about somebody getting hurt, a student getting killed in a mob scene or something. He probably already told you this; the state police were wonderful. They told him privately that there were no bullets in any of their guns, but they didn't tell anybody else that. The students, of course, didn't know that. So often the military are so gung-ho. The people in the national guard were so young. I mean, they were about the age of the students. Jack said he was really worried, with all these gangsters on TV, that they would just pull a trigger. This commanding general of the national guard said, "I think so too, and for that reason there's no ammunition. They don't have any. They can't put it in if they wanted to." They were just supposed to be this military presence, and if that didn't work, then there would be rioting, or whatever there was going to be, but at least probably nobody would get killed, although of course people can get killed other ways.

This was, of course, way before Kent State [in 1972]; this was at the beginning. I think the national guard was called on the campus two or three times.

### **Tim's "Accident," a Cruel Prank**

S. Peltason: The worst time for us personally was the day I got a phone call from somebody who said he was an intern at Harvard's hospital and that our son, who was at Harvard then, had just been brought in unconscious from an automobile wreck. They didn't know whether he was going to make it or not, and they needed us to be available.

Lage: You must have been frantic.

S. Peltason: At first I asked, "Was anybody with him in the car?" because Tim was going with Jan, his wife now. He said, no, that Tim had been alone in the car. This caller said he needed to know exactly where we were so he could get in touch with us at any moment of the day or night. I said, "Oh, well, we'll just be on our way there." "No, no, no, don't do that. We have some exploratory things--we don't know but we might need your permission for surgery. So we need to have you where we can reach you because we can't operate, and if there's brain damage or something we need--." I said, "Will he survive?" and they said, "We don't know." So I said, "All right, one of us will be at this number and the other one will take a plane and start there right away."

Jack was in a meeting, and I called him and said, "Tim's been hurt, and he's unconscious, and they don't know whether he's going to survive or not." We were trying to decide which one of us would go and which would stay to give permission. Jack came home from his meeting, and we called Dan McClelland, who was Jack's right-hand man and asked him to drive me to Chicago to catch a plane to Boston. I called a friend in Boston and asked him if I could stay there. I guess I called a friend to see if he could go over to the hospital. I tried to call Jan's room, Tim's girlfriend, to try to be sure that somebody was with him in case he came to.

I thought it was kind of odd that she wasn't there at the hospital when this intern called, but I thought it was an accident, and they had just brought him in from the car. About an hour later, after Jack was back and Dan McClelland was there and we were milling around, the phone rang. I picked it up, and this person said, "We want you to know that was a prank. That was just a prank, that call." So then Jack ran upstairs and called Tim. Tim was sitting right by his phone the whole time, sitting at the desk, in his dorm, working. It never occurred to me to just call his dorm room.

Lage: No, it wouldn't.

S. Peltason: I still think about "that time that Tim almost died," because you live through it so at the moment.

Anyway, that night there was an anonymous letter left in the mailbox saying, "I'm very sorry. I'm the one who called you, and it didn't occur to me how you might feel." I thought that was very interesting, and not SDS student types at all, that somebody would say, "that was beyond the pale and we shouldn't have done it." You know, they could have told me his leg was broken, but he couldn't talk on the phone, instead of telling me that maybe he was going to die. I mean, they could have done it another way.

It turned out Jack was going to go to this event, and they wanted him to respond to some demands that night. We were going to some kind of faculty reception, and the students asked his secretary to tell them where he was going. Jack's office secretary said, "We're not going to tell you where he's going. There's no reason. If you want to present something to him you can come in here and present it during office hours; you don't do it at eight o'clock at night." They just wanted to know where we were going to be at a certain minute. They wanted us to be by the phone.

Lage: So that they could give their demands.

S. Peltason: Apparently that was it. We never knew how they thought we would be ready to concentrate on their demands if we thought our son was dying; that may be one of the other reasons someone thought better of it. But we could have saved ourselves a lot of pain if I had called Tim's phone number right away. Of course, he was frequently not in his dorm room in the daytime.

This incident was kind of typical of all that sort of stuff. I remember we moved Jill to the back bedroom because we had bomb threats. Our house was away from the campus, but demonstrators were always parading around. Jill's room had been in front, and I moved her to the back in case they threw anything, a bottle or something. I thought it would scare her.

Lage: Did you yourself become a subject of any harassment?

S. Peltason: Not specifically, no. I mean, beside that business about our son. Tim and Jan were freshmen together at Harvard, and they finished together in four years. Then he went to Cambridge University in England for a year, and she was starting her Ph.D. at the University of Illinois, in clinical psychology.

Lage: Was she from Illinois?

S. Peltason: No. Her parents were in Saudi Arabia, but they were from Washington, D.C. Her father had been in the CIA, I think. When she first went to Harvard they were still in Riyadh, I think, and then they moved back to Washington.

Illinois had a good clinical psychology program and that was the degree she wanted. Anyway, when Tim was back here one time the student protesters were circulating another thing on the campus. They were always having petitions; about half of them said the chancellor was a pig. You know, the "Pig Chancellor" wouldn't do this or wouldn't do that. Jan said she was insulted when they asked her to sign. She said, "No, I won't sign that. I know Jack, and he's not a pig." I asked Tim and he said, "Oh, I just sign that stuff when they give it to me. There's no point arguing with them. I just grab it and scratch it so that they can't recognize me." I said to Jack, "That's what you get for faking autographs when Tim was little."

When Tim was little, Jack would go to the basketball games and come back, and Tim would say, "Did you get any autographs?" "Sure." Jack would take the program and write the basketball players' names, slanting this way and that, and hand them to Tim, "Yes, here are all of them." I said, "Jack, that's terrible. You must not do that." So when Tim signed the petitions, I said to Jack, "That's your payback for giving him false signatures when he was little. He figures, what does a signature mean? It doesn't mean anything."

They were bad years, but they were over, probably, in '72. The first five years Jack never left the campus, I don't think, except to go up to the regents' meetings in Chicago, and then something would always happen. I think maybe Kent State, was that '72? It was sort of over by '72, but of course we didn't know that for about a year. We were still on pins and needles, and every public event was another opportunity for demonstrations.

Lage: The end of the turbulence came in about '72?

S. Peltason: It did, yes. The Wisconsin bombing, where the graduate student was killed at the University of Wisconsin, and that was an SDS type of thing--. And then Kent State, the national guard just had itchy fingers, you know, young kids not used to having people screaming at them. Exactly the sort of thing that Jack was afraid of.

**Social Responsibilities of the Chancellor's Wife: "A Killing Job When You're Trying So Hard"**

Lage: So you had some years that were less hectic.

S. Peltason: The last five years were less hectic. Jack did take several trips around the world in those five years and trips to Illinois programs in Iran.

Lage: Did you go with him?

S. Peltason: I didn't. Jill was still fairly little. She was born in '62, so she was a young teen then. I didn't go because one was a six-week trip.

When I look at the calendar in those days when he was doing this, it's incredible the schedule we had. Even when he wasn't there. We were always out five nights a week, and often seven--often several things per night. It's a big, active university.

Lage: More so than when you came back here to Irvine?

S. Peltason: Yes, more than here, because Illinois was so much bigger. But when you're a new chancellor you try to do everything. I see that the Cicerones are doing it now at UCI. I remember one of the first Sundays we were in Illinois, we had eleven things on the calendar and like dumb-dumbs, we went from one to the other all afternoon and evening. I had told each one--it was the opening of school, I think--that we had several other things; we would just stop by. We were absolutely zombies by the end of the day. I mean, it was a crazy thing to try to do. We didn't do any more than just show up, twenty minutes or so, driving back and forth. I tried to fix them on the map.

Just to attend one, then come back to the car, go to the next one, walking to the ones that were on campus; it was really a killing job at the beginning when you're trying so hard. People want to get to know who you are and what it is you stand for. We would try to go to everything and would try hard with each person we met to project some feeling of personal warmth. That takes a lot of energy.

Lage: Did it calm down later on?

S. Peltason: Well, I think there were always that many requests. We got a little bit smarter and didn't accept so many. A lot of people knew Jack anyway, because we'd been there for thirteen years before, and as more people knew him--I don't know that we tried to do every one of the ceremonies, like Christmas parties of every single little group.

Lage: You learned that.

S. Peltason: We did. If we could string them out and see them all at least once during the year--I kept a pretty close tab on all of that. I had wonderful help there. I didn't have a social

secretary because I had Dan McClelland, who was Jack's right-hand person, and he just did all of this. And then, Jack had several secretaries and a big office at Illinois.

Lage: You could draw on that office?

S. Peltason: I just used that all the time, and they were remarkably efficient about getting together lists for parties that I wanted to do. I would say, "Get all the people who are interested in this or that or the other," and they would search it out. I was greatly helped by the fact that Dave Henry had been very skillful at all that and had a very elaborate system for running his whole office. I inherited an absolute genius in Janet Gravlin, who worked for Dan. She could turn out a mountain of work in an hour and never failed to get any information that I needed for an event.

Lage: For the social side of it?

S. Peltason: Yes.

Lage: Was it spelled out in writing?

S. Peltason: It wasn't that it was spelled out what to do but the process by which you decided whom to invite to what event. The staff knew the interests of everybody on the faculty, and townspeople too. If there was a speaker coming who was going to talk about global peace and conflict or something, they would immediately give me the names. It was before the day of computers, of course. They had all this information on file cards and in their heads. There were visiting lecturers in town. There were a hundred a week, but there were maybe three a week where Jack would introduce the speaker or be on the platform or give a welcome, that we were really involved with. We felt we should have receptions after. I tried to host at least one big thing for every school on the campus, each college.

Lage: Each year?

S. Peltason: Each year. Some of them got to be kind of traditional. The arts school [College of Fine and Applied Arts], we always did a reception for them in connection with an annual art exhibit that they had. There were some obvious events like that. We couldn't do something for every department just because there were too many departments. I had to lump the biosciences all together, when we would use the university house. We had a very small house there; it was just a regular family house. It was about the size of this one. I mean, it was small for entertaining large groups. The president stayed in the big house that had been built for campus entertaining. Illinois really is not made for a multi-campus system the way California is, and it's much harder when the president of the system is in the town too and, in our case, had been the president of the campus for all those years.

Lage: Clark Kerr had a similar situation when [UC President Robert Gordon] Sproul became president, and Clark Kerr became chancellor [at UC Berkeley].

S. Peltason: Yes, and Sproul stayed in the house, I guess, didn't he? I remember Kay [Kerr] saying one time, "We couldn't move in because they wouldn't move out." And I think I said to Kay one time that they had chosen to stay in their house, and she said, "Well, it wasn't exactly a free choice. The Sprouls wouldn't move out."

### **Forum on "Liberating the Administrator's Wife," 1974**

Lage: Was it ever enunciated exactly why you were doing all of this entertaining? Was this responsibility just something you get when you are chancellor and chancellor's wife?

S. Peltason: As far as I could see, it was just evolving from all that looking for clues I was doing the whole time. Jack became a dean and then I desperately looked around to see what the other deans' wives did. I noticed they had a cocktail party for all the departments in their division. Not for all the people, because there would be a thousand or something in one college, but for all the department chairs and some townspeople. We'd go to them because we were invited since Jack was a dean.

No, no one ever told me, "This, that, or the other is expected of you," in any of my jobs. Women started, probably in the late seventies, trying to advise and help each other on what was expected of them when their husbands became administrators.

In 1972, Jack and I attended a meeting of the American Council on Education [ACE] in Miami Beach with the unusual theme of "Women in Higher Education," and it started with the statement "Discrimination against women in higher education exists and must be eliminated." That was amazing!

Lage: Was that before Jack was ACE president?

S. Peltason: Right. He became president in 1977. Roger Heyns was president then. The meeting had been planned by Todd Furniss and Patricia Graham, and they edited the papers into a book which was published in 1974. There was even a panel called "Defining the Responsibilities of the Administrator's Spouse." Kay Kerr was on the panel, as was Tebby Lyman from Stanford and Ann Fuller from Oberlin and a couple of other people. Ann was a professor, as well as first lady, and her paper was called "Liberating the Administrator's Wife."

Lage: Was "Liberating the Administrator's Wife" suggesting that the women shouldn't fulfill that traditional supporting role?

S. Peltason: Let me read the first paragraph: "It is tacitly assumed in colleges and universities that when a man is hired as a senior administrator, his wife will also perform services for the institution. No similar assumption applies to the husband of the woman administrator, for a man's work role takes precedence over his other roles. His job



precludes service to his wife's employer, just as it excuses him from a major role in housekeeping and child rearing. A woman, even if she is employed, is expected to take charge of the housekeeping and the children and is also expected to help her husband in his career. If he is a college administrator, this last responsibility means that she must render service to the college." And went on to make an eloquent plea for the first lady's right to choose how much of the social and housekeeping functions she wanted to do and for the institution to buy those services elsewhere if she chose not to do them.

For the presidents and their wives, at least there was usually an allowance, but the deans' wives had to take all their entertaining money out of their own pockets; at least I did. I think maybe the deans' wives do get some now, but they didn't when we started.

That ACE meeting and *The Feminine Mystique* was the inspiration for a whole movement in the academy. Betty Corbally wrote *The Partners: Sharing the Life of a College President*, 1977. NASULGC [National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges] created the Committee of Presidents' and Chancellors' Spouses in 1981. Bobbie Ostar of AASCU [American Association of State Colleges and Universities] wrote *Myths and Realities: 1983 Report on the AASCU Presidential Spouses* with a preface by Clark Kerr. Clark Kerr and Marian Gade wrote *The Many Lives of Academic Presidents*, 1986. In 1984, the NASULGC committee I mentioned published *The President's Spouse, Volunteer or Volunteered*, under the guidance of Joan Clodius, the wife of the president of NASULGC.

Lage: That's a great title.

S. Peltason: Yes. It was reviewed in the *Los Angeles Times*, because Sue Young wrote one of the chapters in here.

Lage: I just wanted to get the name you mentioned there.

S. Peltason: Joan Clodius, her husband was president of NASULGC when Jack was president of ACE. [Showing photographs] Here's Jean Aldrich at UCI.

Lage: They're all here, aren't they? Is this Libby Gardner?

S. Peltason: Yes, this is Libby when they were at Utah. This was at a Utah basketball game. This is Barbara Uehling.

Lage: Who is her husband?

S. Peltason: Stanley Johnson. This is when she was chancellor at University of Missouri. This is Nancy Silverman, who is here now at UCI, when her husband was at the University of Maine.

The American Council on Education: Life in Washington, D.C., 1977-1984

Lage: Were you ever interviewed for one of Jack's jobs?

S. Peltason: No.

Lage: Did you ever have the sense that you were being looked over? Of course, they knew you.

S. Peltason: Never did. In the case of ACE, Bob Flemming was the chairman. He recruited Jack all by himself. We had known Bob and Sally for a long time. I said, "What is expected of me?" and he said that usually the committees all have dinner at the ACE house when they meet in Washington. Then whatever your predecessor had done, you would do it with your own variation or your own thing.

Lage: So ACE was not necessarily a relief from the entertaining?

S. Peltason: Nothing like that, no. The trouble with the ACE job was that Jack was on the road for fully half the year. I mean, two days at home and three days away; four days at home, two days away. Not six months here and six months there. I was alone a lot there. The other trouble with that entertaining was--I think there were nine subcommittees or something, all made up of presidents of colleges--they would come to town and meet and then they'd go home. So you weren't building any kind of friendships. They were all from out of town. But you were building friendships on campuses, and that was an interesting part of the job. It gave you the perspective of the community colleges, which I had not known before.

Lage: But with ACE it wasn't like you lived in a campus community.

S. Peltason: It wasn't like you lived in a community in Washington. It was downtown, in Georgetown, where we lived. I loved that house, but Jill was going through puberty then, and I was going through menopause, and it was a bad combination. [laughter] It was a hard time to be alone a lot. Jill was very unhappy about the move from Illinois. She'd been so happy there, and she was very unhappy in Washington. She was having a hard time in school. I agonized for her, and then, when she got a little bit happier, I was glad. And then she was out, and Jack would be away.

Lage: Then you had to worry about many nights.

S. Peltason: Many nights alone, and I was worried about that. Many nights alone. We were there for the four years that Jill was at the University of Maryland. I loved Georgetown, and I liked the house. It was a nice house and it was nice, kind of small-town living.

Lage: You had made friends, didn't you? Or not as much?

S. Peltason: Not so many close friends but a fairly large group of "close acquaintances." Our friends were scattered all over Virginia and Maryland and Washington, so we didn't have a neighborhood. We were coming from Urbana, where the whole town was university-centered, and we knew everybody in town practically, and everybody on the campus.

But I was ready for a change when we left Illinois. I was tired of the schedule, and it was, I thought, kind of hard on Jill. I don't know that she had such a happy childhood. We had a different au pair girl each year, and they were all busy with their own lives. There was only one who was really great for Jill.

Lage: What does Jill say about it now?

S. Peltason: I don't know. We haven't talked about it much. Now she always tries to say anything that would make me feel good. I'm lucky about that, my children have never said anything critical. Nancy always says that people sit around and talk about what their parents did wrong, but "I can't think of a single thing my parents did wrong." Whereas *I* can think of plenty of things that we did wrong.

Lage: You're harder on yourself than they are.

S. Peltason: Jill wouldn't tell me now, but it was a kind of unhappy time for her. But I had time for her; it wasn't like I didn't have the time. I had the time, and we were pretty close, but it wasn't enough to make up for missing the friends she had in Urbana.

### **Returning to UC Irvine, 1984; The UC Chancellors' Wives Organize for Official Recognition**

Lage: You must have been happy when the call came from Irvine.

S. Peltason: I was very happy. I had loved our first three years there. I was kind of sorry to have Jack go back to being a chancellor again, because that had been very strenuous for me, but I was so happy about moving back here because we had loved it before. It was at the outset of all this, the movement of consciousness-raising of the wives at the University of California, and Sue Young [wife of UCLA Chancellor Charles Young] was the leader of that, in the effort to create a title, the "associates."

Lage: It had started already in this ACE forum?

S. Peltason: Yes. Sue was a part of every one of those meetings. She was very active in NASULGC at that time and in all the national organizations, including AAU [Association of American Universities].

Lage: Was the proposal that came forth, somewhat later, a long time in the making?

S. Peltason: Yes, it had been underway for a long time. This proposal from Sue was March 19, 1987. [See Appendix A] We met in February, and I think it was the next fall when it was finally made.

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Lage: You have talked about meeting in Santa Cruz in the fall of 1986, when all the chancellors' wives were in Santa Cruz. Did the chancellors' wives meet as a group in any kind of formal way?

S. Peltason: No. We were all there, and we were having drinks at the bar. Our husbands were all there for the regents' meeting. It was the night before. I guess our husbands were in the meeting with the president, the president and chancellors' meeting. Libby [Gardner, the president's wife] happened not to be there that time, so it was just the chancellors' wives. It just happened that all nine of us were there, hardly ever did that happen. We went in the bar to have drinks, and we started drinking, and just kept drinking for several hours. I think Sue probably kind of led us through.

Lage: Was it a gripe session?

S. Peltason: Well not "gripe" as much as, "Look this [idea for formal recognition] has been drifting around, drifting around in the literature. Why don't we do something about it?" I think we probably went along with Sue's opinion. Sue would have liked to see a salary, but I think there were enough of us uneasy with that, that Sue had sort of said, "Okay, that's not going to happen."

We were trying to have the University of California be a leader in some kind of moderate program that could be picked up by other universities and colleges. We thought that you weren't going to get remuneration. Many of the smaller schools don't have the money to pay anything to the university president's wife and not all the wives want social secretaries. Ann Fuller's point had been to give the wife help. Let her have her own secretary. Let her have an office. Let her have some kind of status for doing all this work. At that time we were all just saying, "How can we do this?" Sue said, "Well, I'll formulate a letter." But some of us did feel that we had to tell Libby that we were doing this before we went ahead and did it.

Lage: Did you sense that she would agree or not agree?

S. Peltason: We thought she would agree, and I thought that she would be a big help in doing it. She, in fact, was the one who took it on through with David. She organized a meeting in Santa Barbara [February 19, 1987] when we were all officially to talk. She had Ron Brady come and talk to us about what the rules were, the regents' rules, and the rules for using money, and for other things: what was possible. It was after that meeting that Libby organized in Santa Barbara that Sue wrote the letter making the request for a

title and place for the spouse of the chancellor or president. And then she made up a job description for the spouse of the chancellor or president.

Lage: Did this go through?

S. Peltason: Yes, this all went through. This says, "The enclosed policy on the spouse of the President is effective November 1, 1987." This is the policy. [See Appendix B] Actually, California did give the chancellor's wife some kind of a car allowance if we wanted. We had to show--I remember keeping a little notebook in my car. If you went and you were buying flowers, or you were getting stuff for some official entertainment, you had to keep track of the time.

Lage: And you got some kind of a reimbursement?

S. Peltason: That was the cash allowance. The money, I don't know how many people ever got that, but we all kind of pooh-poohed about that because whatever it was--3 percent of our husband's salary for the years that we had served as Associate--but it was paid to our husbands. In effect, it was just added to his salary. Of course, it discriminated against the women chancellors who didn't have spouses or whose spouses chose not to participate. Barbara Uehling, and now UCSC Chancellor Marcy Greenwood just didn't get that bonus. That was something else the rest of them got, but she didn't get. I don't know; I think that bothered Barbara a little bit. I think maybe she and Stanley had already been divorced. Marcy wasn't chancellor yet. UCR Chancellor Rosemary Schraer's husband, Harald, chose to be an associate.

One of the things that I thought was so great about the associate title was that you could choose not to take it. If you chose not to take it then you were saying, "I don't want to do all this stuff. The university will take care of that." Now, if you live in a university house you obviously can't say, "I'm not going to allow this house to be used." A lot of them, at Ron and Dave's urging, were not in the university houses. I think they're all back in them now. The university house supposedly is given so that people will entertain, so you can't say, "I don't want this house to be used for official events." But you can say, "I'm not going to have anything to do with it. I'm not going to run this. You get the flowers, and you have somebody send out the invitations, plan the menu, clean up after, and I'm going to go on with my life. Maybe I'll show up as a hostess, and maybe I won't."

Lage: Then later this official recognition of the spouses was one of the actions of the Gardner administration that came under fire?

S. Peltason: Well, it was just more money. The thought was, "Why give the wives money? The chancellors already get these enormous salaries, and they get a house." Jack eliminated that when he was president. I'm not even sure it came under fire. I think maybe he just eliminated it knowing it would. The title still exists, but I don't know whether the other chancellors' spouses are even aware of it now. I must ask Carol [Cicerone] some time if she even knows that she could be an associate.

Lage: Were the wives very upset when the stipend was eliminated?

S. Peltason: Sue was very upset, but then Sue wasn't speaking to me anyway, so I just heard that through Jack.

Lage: That's a sad thing.

S. Peltason: It was very sad, still the hardest part. It still distresses me that I have to call around and ask other people how she is. I understand her cancer is in remission again now. I'm pleased about that, but I was so hoping we could get back some--it was so distressing, a most distressing thing.

### III CHANCELLOR'S WIFE AT UC IRVINE, 1984-1992

[Interview 2: November 30, 1999] ##

#### Travails of the Official and Unofficial Chancellor's Houses in Irvine

Lage: Last time we discussed the creation of the chancellor's associate status when you were at Irvine. Let's talk more now about coming back to Irvine. You were glad to get back, it sounded like.

S. Peltason: Very glad, very glad. We loved it here, and we thought we'd been priced out of the market, that we could never return.

Lage: Because you'd sold the house when you'd left?

S. Peltason: Yes, we had sold the house when we left in '67. This was '84. During those years the big rise in the market had come, and we had loved Irvine, but we said, "Well, we just can't--." We had lived in Newport Beach in the sixties, and if we returned we would have wanted to return to that neighborhood.

Lage: What was there for you at Irvine when you moved back?

S. Peltason: The same house that Dan and Jean Aldrich had lived in, the chancellor's house, University House on Galaxy Drive. We moved in, and Jack had taken note that David Gardner had said the house should probably be on the campus now. It couldn't be in '64 because there was no infrastructure going up to the site Bill Pereira had picked for the chancellor's house when he designed the campus.

It was a beautiful house, the one that the Aldriches had. Charlie Thomas, who was president of the Irvine Company, let the university buy a lot that he had been saving for his own house, but it was six miles from the campus, and when you entertained people there they had no sense of what the college campus was like.

There are a lot of presidents and chancellors who don't want to live on campus, because then they are right there for protests and everything, and I must say that during our years in Illinois I was glad that the house wasn't on campus. Still, that's where it

should be if you're going to use it for guests of the university. There should be guest quarters, and if you have a distinguished lecturer you should be able to have him stay at the house.

Lage: Actually stay with the president?

S. Peltason: I don't know how many actually use their extra guest rooms in the big houses for university lecturers and guests. Probably not very many. The president of Alabama did, the Bartletts. It just depends upon the woman. Mollie Bartlett always had guests stay with them at any university where she and Tom were. Tom was president at Colgate, American University in Cairo, the University of Alabama, the University of Oregon, and SUNY [State University of New York] at various times, as well as president of AAU when we were in D.C. with ACE. It just depends upon the personality.

Lage: And on the guests.

S. Peltason: And on the guests. And how the house is arranged. It's nice if it's built so that there are some kind of guest quarters, a little bit of a separate apartment. When you have a really distinguished visitor, it's a compliment to them to stay in the chancellor's or president's house.

Lage: Somehow I hadn't realized that was part of the package.

S. Peltason: Oh, it isn't. The package is whatever you make it. There's wide latitude in the way different wives entertain. We were entertained many, many times on many, many campuses, and there is an enormous difference. So often houses were given to the university by donors, the way Blake House was here [UC President's house in Kensington], and that sometimes determines the use. Some were perhaps built for a family and not for entertaining.

Lage: So your house was on Galaxy Drive, which was off campus, and then you went about building a house on campus?

S. Peltason: Well, before we came David said, "It's probably a good time to move the chancellor's house on to campus." Things were still pretty flush in the early eighties. So we moved to the Galaxy Drive house where Dan and Jean [Aldrich] had lived, and started on plans for a University House on the campus.

In his memoirs Jack said that his idea all the time was that we would build the chancellor's house, but that we ourselves would not move into it because then it wouldn't seem so self-serving. If we were building it for ourselves, it would seem that everything we wanted in it was because we wanted it for our convenience, whereas if we built it as a chancellor's house on the campus but were living in our own house, we wouldn't be vulnerable to accusations of extravagance or selfishness.



That was never spelled out to me, and I think it's a looney idea. Of course, whoever is chancellor when it's built should live there and take advantage of the space for entertaining and fundraising. In his defense, I must say that since Jack was sixty years old when we took the job, he probably thought it would be almost time for him to retire anyway by the time a new house was planned, sited, and built, or maybe he suspected that it would not be built in our time at all, which is what actually happened.

Anyway, what he told me in 1984 was that we would move into 1392 Galaxy when we arrived and that I would also start working on plans for the official University House with an architect to be selected by the university. Also, that we would immediately begin looking for a house of our own to move into when the Galaxy house was sold to provide seed money for the house on campus.

I tried to find a house in our price range with an ocean view but soon saw that that was an impossible dream, so I turned to considering the houses that were to be built on campus. Part of Pereira's original plan had been to put houses for faculty and staff on university land and control the price so as to have some affordable housing available to people who moved from other parts of the country to expensive Orange County.

Dan had set up the Independent Campus Housing Authority to develop the project separate from UCI administrative control. ICHA was to lease the land from the university and build the houses. They planned to finance their first phase of building by selling some wonderful view lots for two-hundred thousand dollars each on which the buyer could put custom-designed homes. I wanted to buy one of those lots more than I ever wanted anything in my life and build my own one-floor house on it, but Jack wouldn't even consider it. Despite the fact, or because of it, that housing prices had increased ten-fold since we sold our Eastbluff house in 1967, he figured the market was at the top, and he thought of houses as a money pit. We had lost money on the house we built in Urbana.

Construction was just starting on the first phase of the campus housing project when we moved into the Galaxy Drive house in September, 1984. We bought the biggest plan available in that first phase for our own house. I knew that we would be doing some entertaining between the time we moved out of one university house into the other. I couldn't not. People are always saying "You can just entertain in a hotel or in the Faculty Club," but it isn't the same as being invited to the chancellor's home. Whenever I had small groups, I knew that I would be using my own house. I thought that it would be convenient to be living on the campus when we were building a house nearby, then I thought we'd move into the official house until Jack finished his term as chancellor, which we thought would just be a few years. Sixty-six or sixty-seven was kind of the understood retirement age.

I really loved living in the Galaxy Drive house. Jean and Dan had designed it with architect Henry Burge for entertaining, and it was just right for the size of the campus at that time. The only disadvantage was its distance from the campus. We did a lot of entertaining there that first year that we were back on campus, and if I had known what

was in the future, I would have refused to move out and would just have sublet the house we had bought on the campus until Jack retired.

But of course, hindsight is always better. During the year from September of 1984 to October of 1985, we lived happily in the house, and for nearly a year I worked on planning the official house with George Bissell, while Jack and others worked on raising money to pay for it. George had come up with a beautiful design, I thought, modern, contemporary, like a sculpture.

At about this point, the houses on the campus were finished, and, still thinking that we were going to put up the Galaxy house for sale, I cleared it out, and we moved to 6 Gibbs Court on campus on October 30, 1985. The first snag that I knew about in plans for the new house came when the committee which had been formed to raise money for the project didn't like that design, and they chose another architect, Brion Jeannette. So I started over on plans with Brion for the next six months or so, and we came up with another design, which was also very nice and would also have worked very well for entertaining. Then the next possible funders of the house--all private donors--had other ideas for the design. Things were really getting complicated, and the Orange County economy began to tank. Besides that, many flights had been added to the Orange County airport, and the Galaxy house neighborhood was right under the flight path, so prices there were temporarily depressed. The appraisals on what we could get for 1392 Galaxy kept falling. The university had originally hoped to get one million dollars for the house, and the last appraisal was about six-hundred and ninety-five thousand dollars so the whole project began to disintegrate. As I remember, they were going to go ahead with the sale of the house, but Jack said not to sell it until UCI had something else, because the next chancellor may come from out of town.

Because the Galaxy house was very nice for entertaining, we had moved everything we had from Washington to entertain all that year, which we did a lot that first year, and then we had to take all the pictures off the walls and to pack everything and move it again in a year! It was hard. But at that time I was happily working away with the architect, and we really came up with a beautiful plan. It's heartbreaking to think none of those things ever got built.

Lage: The chancellor's house was never built?

S. Peltason: No, it's being built right now.

I mean, he may be here and have his own house, but he may come from out of town, as we did, and need a place--"he or she," I think Jack always said-- "he or she" may come from out of town and need a place to live.

Lage: The house at Galaxy was kept?

S. Peltason: Yes, it was kept; it was rented out. When we moved into our own house, we got a housing allowance. I can't remember how much we got, a substantial amount, forty

thousand a year, I think, thirty-six thousand a year, maybe, and we rented the Galaxy Drive house for just what our housing allowance was, so that we could have a clear conscience. We never felt right about having the university maintain the university house and also pay us a housing allowance for us to be living somewhere else.

Lage: But then you never had an official residence to do your entertaining in? You ended up using your own home?

S. Peltason: Yes, and of course it was little; the living room was maybe just twelve feet wide, and the dining room was a tiny little alcove. I turned the family room into a dining room just by putting up some hutches to divide it from the kitchen. But it was not very good for entertaining. For just six people for dinner it was okay, and I did have, I remember, a box supper thing there for our symphony one time, but it was very awkward. I had rented a lot of folding chairs, and people were just sitting all over the house, which wasn't comfortable. Of course, there weren't enough tables for people and they were trying to balance their glasses on their laps.

Lage: Was this the house that you live in now?

S. Peltason: No, that was 6 Gibbs Court. We now live in another house that's just a few blocks from there.

Lage: Was the house that you're in now built while you were in the chancellor's house?

S. Peltason: No, while Jack was president.

Lage: Oh, I see. So then it really is new.

S. Peltason: Yes. It was one of the stock plans, but we customized it some. My secretary and her husband moved into it when we left and came up here to Berkeley. We used it quite a lot.

Lage: When you went back to visit the campuses in the south?

S. Peltason: Yes, and I was there more than Jack was.

Lage: How did you manage with the obligation to entertain without the official residence?

S. Peltason: Not very well. The University Club was just then built, and we used that a lot. And there was a big expansion of students during that time, during the last half of the eighties, when the budget was good and [Governor George] Deukmejian was very good to higher education, and David was very good at getting the money for UC. I guess we just used the University Club for almost everything. The Alumni House had a room. We got creative about finding places on campus.

Lage: So it worked?

S. Peltason: It was okay.

### Defining the Role of the Chancellor's Wife

Lage: When you came to Irvine, how did you define the role of the chancellor's wife? It seems so undefined.

S. Peltason: It's just so very personal. Everyone I know has made it different. Usually when you come in, somebody or other will come to you--and sometimes it's annoying and sometimes it's not--and say, "This is what we expect." The wives' clubs on all campuses always expect to have a couple of meetings in the house, and if you'd been chancellor for a while you'd know that. I remember Carol Cicerone, whose husband is now chancellor at Irvine, saying that she'd never been a chancellor's wife before. She's a very distinguished professor and, suddenly, her husband was an administrator, and she began to think then about what she ought to do, though mostly she was a professor. Ralph Cicerone was brought in as chair of the Department of Earth Systems Science, a new department at Irvine, and then became dean of physical sciences, and then chancellor.

I remember when I asked her if she would have a meeting for the faculty wives' group--they asked me to please ask her, so I asked her--she said, "Oh, is that something that chancellors' wives usually do?" and I said, "Yes." When she said this, I had been doing this for so long, by then. Some things are common sense, that you ought to entertain distinguished visitors. If one of your faculty members gets the Nobel Prize, you have a party, you get it together in a hurry. There are just different ways of doing it.

The idea that the wife had a social secretary was almost unheard of until the seventies maybe, and that's when the wives finally began to agitate at California. That led to the associates thing. We said, "Look, we're taking care of little kids." Some of the wives were doctors or lawyers, some were professional people. Some were homemakers, but even so, to run the house--.

We had very little other money when Jack was chancellor at Illinois. I don't think we had any extra help in cleaning--well, we gradually got it--and I had a little child, a four year old, and two teenagers. People just gradually evolve it according to their own personalities. Like in the business world, there were just some of the wives who seemed to do it all. They seemed to entertain beautifully and easily, and take care of all their children, and go to all the PTA meetings.

Lage: Of course, you don't know what was going on behind the scenes.

S. Peltason: You don't know how they did it. Some people now do it too. People just made it according to their own personalities. I've known some wives who almost never show up for anything, Freida Huttenbach, for example, and yet she probably was entertaining at their home. I understand Julia Child was a good friend of theirs. Freida was probably doing all that, but she didn't come to chancellors' meetings and stuff.

I remember calling Sue Young before Jack's inauguration and asking "Now, what am I supposed to do about the wives, and which wives are likely to be here?" We were naming the wives. "So-and-so, she'll be here, and So-and-so, she'll likely be here." I asked, "What about Mrs. Huttenbach?" and Sue said, "Mrs. Huttenbach didn't go to her own husband's inauguration; she's not likely to come to yours!" And of course, she didn't. [laughter]

Lage: Was there any resentment among the other wives?

S. Peltason: Oh, no. I think they just thought that was funny. I think the general feeling was "More power to her."

Lage: You all might have been sucked into things you really hadn't asked for.

S. Peltason: Yes. Some of us were very mousey. Anything we heard we were supposed to do, we did. Some were a little bit more--the longer you did it--at that time Chuck [Young] must have been chancellor [at UCLA] for nearly twenty years--Sue had made it her own. She said that she was scared to death when she first came in, following Mrs. Franklin Murphy.

Lage: She must have been very young.

S. Peltason: Yes. She was looking out for clues as to "What will I do?" and "How shall I do it?" People called and asked to use the house for everything. Your church calls because the bishop is coming to town, and they'd like to have the bishop's tea at your house. Then the woman has to decide. I think most of the women do think of it as their own house too. If they want to use it for a sorority gathering, I don't think that they worry that it's not their own house. Most of the women I know wouldn't hesitate to use it for their church or their sorority functions or something else that was just theirs.

Lage: But they might not use their social secretary for that?

S. Peltason: No. Maybe not. We didn't even have social secretaries until--I did have one at Irvine. It was one of the things that I did ask for when Jack was negotiating. I had had so much help at Illinois. There was a big office, and it was extremely well managed. I've been to more universities since then, and I came to realize how extremely well managed the University of Illinois is. Our children had been there, and two of our grandchildren were there as students. Our daughter was there for one year. Tim [grandson] got his degree at Illinois and then moved to UCLA law school. And Kristin [granddaughter] got her degree at Illinois, and then moved to UC Berkeley Public

Health to get a master's. They both were struck by how much better Illinois was run than either UCLA or Berkeley. At UCLA, which is kind of famously well-managed, Tim said that for the law school, the ease in registering--. Of course, traffic and parking and all that's simpler in Urbana than in Los Angeles.

Lage: Was Illinois better organized even in terms of things for students?

S. Peltason: Yes, for students. I think probably Dave Henry gets a lot of credit for that. Whatever it was, when we got to Illinois, there was a long tradition of everything being well taken care of. One of the reasons was that there was a whole office just to do special events. Well, there probably is at Berkeley and at UCLA too.

I remember just being stunned when I first got to Illinois, and I would decide that we were going to have a party for the art department. I didn't know how to begin. They would come an hour later and present, "Now these are the art people, and these are the people who've been supporters in the community. Maybe you want to ask one or two people from Chicago; these would be the big people. These are the people who gave to the art museum when we were building it back twenty years ago." They had everything where they could get it.

We didn't have computers in those day, you know. It was just all information that had been well used, well researched, and well stored, always up-to-date. They never sent out list of invitations where you'd get returns because people didn't live there anymore. I don't know how they did it.

I never had that level of help again in anything I did. Not at Irvine, not in the president's office. You always had the feeling that people were struggling to keep up with a mountain of work that they couldn't handle. I don't think Illinois did spend more. I don't think it was a bigger proportion of staff. I don't know.

Lage: Did you look to Jean Aldrich as a model at Irvine? Had she defined the role of the chancellor's wife in a way that you would want to continue?

S. Peltason: Well, sort of. I had been doing it at Illinois at about the same time Jean had been at UCI. Now, I adored Jean, still do, and admired the way she did everything, but I don't think I was even aware how very hands off she and Dan were when we came back to Irvine. Neither she nor Dan ever once called up and said, "We want to have this group or that group." Other people may have asked them to please get messages to us, but they didn't. If they did get requests from others, they were wonderful not to try to push me one way or another. I had been at Irvine for the three years previously, but the campus wasn't even open yet then. I hadn't been at Irvine when Jean was acting as "first wife," and it evolved for her too. She hadn't been a chancellor's wife before, and the university was brand new.

I think a lot of times people feel that this transition from one administration to another is a good time to make a change: "We have a new chancellor, let's do it this

new way." I know that happened with the president's office when I left. Jack had said that he wanted Blake House to be available to the president for any retreat or meeting. Anyone who wanted to use it, it belonged to the whole Office of the President. And they did use it. It was a terrible burden on Carolyn [Binger]. It was a lot of work.

UCOP retreat members would come in, there'd be ten of them for a meeting, and they'd say to Carolyn, "We don't want to be disturbed, if there are any calls--." Well, there wasn't even a buzzer system, and Carolyn was upstairs and they were down in the conference room. There were constant calls. They'd get calls every two minutes. Poor Carolyn would be answering the phone all day long and running up and down the steps.

Lage: Were these people from the Office of the President?

S. Peltason: Yes, they often had retreats at Blake House, all-day meetings. They'd have lunch.

When the Atkinsons came in, I said to Rita, "Don't even think of making this house open to the whole office." It had never been used that way. Since the Gardners didn't live in it all those years, they had used it for chancellors' meetings quite a bit. They did have a conference room upstairs. But they had never used it the way we did when we were there. They didn't have all day meetings there.

Lage: You were living there?

S. Peltason: Yes, we were living there. Oh, it was a nuisance, because it took so much of Leslie's and Carolyn's time.

Lage: Now, Leslie and Carolyn were who?

S. Peltason: Carolyn was the manager of Blake House. She still is. Leslie was the housekeeper. She did all the cleaning in that huge house herself and was the sole cleaner-upper and furniture mover after those day-long meetings. For other meetings the gardeners would come in and help us move tables and chairs.

Lage: Were you actually the person who did the interviewing, made the decision, and hired the Blake House staff?

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S. Peltason: Yes, I hired Carolyn, then she hired Leslie. Carolyn was responsible for running the house.

Lage: That is kind of an official thing to do, to be the person doing the staff hiring, yet you're not in an official position.

S. Peltason: I fought for that when we were at Illinois. I am not an employee of the University of California and so for a while they said I couldn't hire my own staff. I can't remember how we worked it out at Irvine--they said I couldn't be the one, and in that case it was somebody in Jack's office who did the evaluations of my secretary. I did say that it seemed silly. I mean, I was the employer, I was the one who made the decision about who was going to work as my secretary, and I was the one who could have said, "All right, I want a change."

Lage: But it's all sort of unofficial.

S. Peltason: I didn't have the power, legally, to do that and if the office people had wanted to be sticklers about that they could have been. That was one of the issues we brought up with the associates thing. The spouses manage such a big staff; they ought to be officially the people who hire the staff. I think Sue worked this out during the years she was at UCLA. By the time I came, she was the manager. I don't know whether she signed the evaluation papers or not, but if she didn't, then somebody secretly did it without telling her that she didn't really have the power to do it. [laughter] I think that after we became associates that perhaps we did have the power, that we were recognized. We weren't employees of the university, but we had some status that I think would allow us to do that.

### **Entertaining and Fundraising: A Delicate Balance**

Lage: Getting back to Irvine, was your role more in relation to the campus--the students and the faculty--or the community?

S. Peltason: Well, of course, that changes as the mission of the campus changes. As the mission of all the campuses relied more on private dollars, the role of the chancellor's wife was to entertain community people. At Illinois, all of the ten years we were there, I don't think I ever once entertained a potential donor. The president and the foundation did all of that. Jack and I, as chancellor, would be invited to a party to talk to donors, but we were not responsible for organizing the event.

Lage: At Irvine, were you responsible from the time you got there, or did this evolve over those years?

S. Peltason: I was responsible from the time I got there. It was a new initiative. Dan and Jean did not like asking for money, and it was not part of the deal when they were hired. It was not something the chancellors had to do much. In the sixties--the Master Plan for Higher Education that Clark Kerr worked out, which was such a genius of a plan --the research, educational, and service responsibilities of higher education were all divided up among the Cal State system and the UC system and the community college system.



It was the same with the funding of all of these. The state funded generously, and faculty got research grants from federal money as well. Private universities were then beginning to get federal money too, of course, but originally it was kind of separate. In fact, when Jack was first in the business it was really considered sort of dirty pool to go out after private money. The private universities all said, "This is where we have to get our money from."

Lage: So there was a kind of understanding.

S. Peltason: "You're getting yours from the taxpayer."

Lage: But the time you went to Irvine--.

S. Peltason: Well, by the time we went to Irvine as chancellor, John Miltner had just been hired, the first "advancement" person. Before that we had "PR" people. Dan had hired him. Dan said that one of the reasons he was glad to retire was that he didn't want to go into that whole new phase, and Jean didn't either. They didn't mind having parties for people. That is all I did. I never had to do "the ask," as they call it, but Jack had to do "the ask." The chancellor does have to; he has to go to people and say, "Look, this is a good program, and you ought to help us support it."

Lage: It sounds like some of the entertaining became a little more directed.

S. Peltason: That first year I knew that we were going to be a limited time in the chancellor's house. I thought we were going to be moving into another big house. I didn't really think we were going to stay in ours, but I knew it would be a couple of years, that there would be a transition. So I tried to get a lot of stuff in the first year we were there, when we were in the house that was good for entertaining. I bet we had several thousand people that year.

I got there with my breezy informal Illinois persona, and I said, "Everyone is going to be curious to see what the Peltasons have done to the house after the Aldriches have been in it for twenty years. We will invite all of the faculty to come to the house." Well, there were about a thousand people on the faculty. "If each one brings a spouse or a guest, let's say 2,000. So we'll set up parties on ten Friday nights in the fall, starting in mid-October through December."

I sent this kind of informal invitation out, that Linda and I did enormous amounts of work on, and also Pat Price over in the Office of Academic Affairs, trying to get all these names. I got all the names and decided that I wasn't going to do it by department. I was going to send invitations alphabetically. One of my purposes was to mix up people from all different departments. That's something we tried to do at Illinois a lot.

Lage: Was that a philosophical decision of yours and Jack's?

S. Peltason: Jack never had any opinion about the entertaining. He never said no. Everything we did in that line was totally my own decision. He didn't care. If I asked him, he'd say, "That sounds good." I never knew whether he heard me or not. "That's a good idea, a good idea, whatever you think." [laughter] So, I'd say to his secretary, "Save these days, and tell him he has to be here."

We sent this invitation, "We're so glad to be here and we want to see everybody." I don't think that I was quite so informal that I was saying, "We thought you might want to look at us," but I said something about meeting all the new people on the campus. In the upper part of the invitation there were ten dates, and the A to F on October 10, and G to something else. On the bottom half of the thing I wrote, "If it's convenient, please come on the date your name falls in alphabetically. If it's not convenient, come any time that it's convenient. We want to see you." That made everybody furious. Apparently, the invitation came across as terminally tacky instead of breezy and informal.

Lage: Oh no! They didn't like your alphabetical scheme?

S. Peltason: No. It was like being regimented. "We're numbers and not like people at all."

Lage: How did you get that kind of feedback?

S. Peltason: I guess through the secretaries. Ruth Ann Baker, I remember, told me that somebody told her, "That's the tackiest thing I ever saw." I think that one or two people said things to me. It was a total fiasco. The ten nights there would be maybe twenty-eight or thirty people there, out of a possible two hundred, since there were about two thousand total. I had divided the alphabet. I got the list first and then counted, and wherever the break was at every two hundred I'd say that was the alphabet letter I'd use. [laughs]

Lage: Was this something you could laugh about? Or was it pretty disturbing?

S. Peltason: Well, at the time I think I didn't take it too seriously. I said, "Well, that was a mistake." I was a little bit hurt, because I thought it was being pretty, oh, I don't know, not "snobbish." I mean, it seems to me so obvious that if somebody's making some kind of effort, you can say, "Well, maybe she doesn't know the nice way to do this, but her heart's in the right place." There didn't seem to be that tolerance.

One woman in the medical school, who was purporting to not agree with all of these people, said she felt she was doing me a favor to let me know. I already knew by then. I said, "How do you suppose I can make up for that?" I said, "I'm terribly sorry, but there isn't any way with 2,000 people for me to go back and invite each of them individually." I just had to consider it a mistake. I never did try to do anything about that. It seemed like it would be silly to make an issue of it.

Lage: Just water under the bridge.

S. Peltason: And so many of the people at the medical school--. Now, I didn't know if that had something to do with the med school. As you've probably heard from Jack's oral history, there were big upheavals there.

Lage: Yes.

S. Peltason: Stanley van den Noort was the dean there, and there was great allegiance to Stanley. I didn't understand any of this when we got there. I hadn't heard any of this. I think maybe Dan had told Jack some of the background. I thought that maybe there were some allegiances there that--. Oh, I don't know.

Lage: Maybe these politics got mixed up with the party?

S. Peltason: They said that the criticism was worse in the medical school. It might also just have been that the medical school people are richer and live in a much more rarified social atmosphere, in that they expect you to know more about protocol.

Lage: You'd think that a nice, laid-back, southern California community would have been more informal.

S. Peltason: Yes. I don't know. I could see doing it by alphabet. I thought after, if I had printed the two hundred names, that would have been just as crummy. I just thought it was a way to invite everybody on campus. Since it was to see the house, I could probably have had one open house one Sunday afternoon and invited everybody and see how it turned out. At Illinois--I guess maybe because there's not so much else to do--the whole 2,000 would have come. Or maybe that was because I'd been there for so long and knew so many people.

Lage: After that, what kinds of events did you organize?

S. Peltason: Then we did a lot more. Since John Miltner had just started and our fundraising was just beginning to be big, I really let John take over with most of our home stuff. It meant a lot to him when trying to court potential donors in Orange County to have events at the chancellor's house. It really was a compliment to be invited there.

Lage: Then you can do "the ask."

S. Peltason: Yes, and of course, that was one of the rules, that never, never at our house would we do "the ask."

Lage: You don't do "the ask"?

S. Peltason: No. No. That would be a--.

Lage: Is that a social gaffe?

S. Peltason: It would just be a tactical mistake. People expect to be able to go out for dinner and just have a social evening and not to have any kind of business, which is something that I always tried to encourage. But when people would say, "Well, let's don't talk business," Jack said, "That's the most interesting thing to talk about." I mean, we talked University of California, and we talked academia, and we talked about any dispute that was going on. If the loyalty oath controversy had been going on, you would have talked about that all evening. When you bring potential donors, you don't say anything about donations during the evening, but it's no secret. People really do know why they are there. They're there because you hope to involve them enough that they'll care enough about the university that they'll want to help the art department, for example.

So much of the fundraising we've been doing down here lately has been in fine arts, but it can be in anything, the sciences, or anything else. The medical school is the easiest to raise money for and one of the ones we've spent a lot on. It just depends on which university, where you are in their development at that moment. When we returned to Irvine, the engineering school needed to be strengthened. The English department was distinguished, but engineering was weaker and so a lot of the fundraising was for buildings in engineering and in the medical school.

Lage: Would the social events include community people who might become interested and faculty or deans from the particular programs?

S. Peltason: Yes, that was one of my rules. Every now and again John [Miltner] would come up with an idea. I said I would invite twenty-four people at a time. I used round tables that I had gotten from some place, and I'd do three tables of eight. Then Jack and I had this pattern that we used all the years we were entertaining. The two of us would be hosts, one at each table, and then I'd usually have John or somebody host the third table. Then the three of us would change tables each course. The first course we'd have at that table and then Jack and John and I would all move. We'd pick up our glass of water and our napkin and move to the next table. Then we'd have the main course. [laughter]

I'd have to try to have the dinner served so that it came out in about the same amount of time, but usually I'd have Jack at the crucial table during the main course. You try to sprinkle people around; I never had a party when I had Jack just sitting with one table. If you are not seated at that "important table" you immediately feel downgraded. You can look around and see who's at the high-rollers table. Now that Jack's retired and we're has-beens we're always by the kitchen door, you know. [laughter]

Lage: You've been re-sat.

S. Peltason: We've been demoted. But those are all those big dinners, benefits at hotels. When it's at your own house, you never want to have a hierarchy. Everybody should be seated at one table. That is fine for ten or twelve. Anyway, John wanted to have more people at

a time. Sometimes he'd come up with a list of twenty-two or twenty-four: i.e., himself and his wife, Jack and me, and twenty potential donors. I'd say to him that we had to put off some of these and put some faculty people in. There's no use coming here and just meeting the chancellor.

Sometimes you didn't know what they might be interested in, but you usually had some clue. By the time the foundation advancement people got their names, they had looked at all their histories and knew what they were interested in. It was silly not to at least have the dean. Usually we would try not to have just the dean, unless that was his specialty. Sometimes you'd find out a potential donor and a faculty member were from the same town. There were just different ways of doing it.

Lage: You must have had favorite faculty who were more charming in these situations than others?

S. Peltason: Yes, there are some, and then there are some who are kind of resentful. There are always some faculty, a fair number, who think the chancellor shouldn't be doing this kind of stuff, that he's going to compromise to raise money and prostitute the campus. They are kind of hostile, or there are some who are just hostile to business people and rich people in general. Every now and then you'd have a party where there was somebody who was married to somebody else whose ex-husband was-- [laughter]

Lage: Six degrees of separation.

### Inviting Students to the Chancellor's House: "They Didn't Have the Social Graces"

S. Peltason: Sometimes there were a number of crucial people involved in one effort, and we couldn't leave anybody out. We had a lot of those events the years we were in there, probably two a month.

I had one when we first moved in for everyone who had worked on the house. When we came in Dan and Jean hadn't done any painting or anything, partly because that last year he knew he was going to retire soon. There's always that little pot of money that comes with any new chancellor to redo and repaint, if you want. We didn't buy any new curtains--well, we bought curtains for the bedroom. I didn't change anything in the living room or any of the public space, but we painted and the kitchen cabinets were refinished. There was some rewiring that needed to be done and other stuff.

So I had a party and had a keg of beer in the back and invited all the physical plant people. That was one of the first things that we did.

Then we had a number of parties for students; graduate students and then fellowship and scholarship students. We had maybe one student event a month, not as many as we did in Illinois.

Lage: That's pretty many, one a month.

S. Peltason: Towards spring there were always groups of students who'd gotten honors and fellowships, Phi Beta Kappa and that kind of thing.

Lage: Would the students come if they were invited?

S. Peltason: Yes. They did come. I had to get used to it. Students had been so buttoned up in my college days, but after the sixties, from then on there was a certain resentment about authority figures. I don't know whether it went back to their relationships with their fathers or what, but we were all suspect. The fallout of this is that they dressed in torn jeans and t-shirts hanging off, and they'd bring babies slung around their necks.

Lage: Even to come to the chancellor's house?

S. Peltason: To come to the chancellor's. I was kind of taken aback. They'd always just sweep through the door. They didn't know that you should shake hands and say hello to the host. They certainly didn't do that when they left. I mean, they'd sneak out. Jack and I would kind of have to go around and button-hole each one: "Hello, how are you? It's nice to have you, so glad you could come." [laughs] Try to elicit some kind of--they didn't have the social graces, and we were so spoiled.

Jack's first teaching job was at Smith, and of course those girls had all the social graces; they were such charming girls. Well, now it's different; I think it's swinging back. But even fifteen to twenty years ago, young people hadn't been taught to say please and thank you and that you always go to the hostess. The people in Nancy's generation, our children's generation, just didn't--well, our children did, our grandchildren all have beautiful manners. I don't think it was rebellion, just more--.

Lage: More informality.

S. Peltason: Yes. They were informal, and that is the way they would go into our house. They thought the chancellor's house was like the student center; it was just another public room. They didn't think of it as our home the way we did, and they probably wouldn't have cared. In fact, they probably would have preferred parties at a student center. It would have been more convenient for them to have had events on campus for one thing. Now I notice the students who come--we had a scholarship thing last week--are much more likely to have a suit and tie and dress up and be normal again. [laughter]

**Reflections on the Demands of a Public Life**

Lage: How did you take to being the chancellor's wife? I was struck by the piece that you wrote for Ann Conway [notes for a conversation with journalist Conway in 1994] in which you emphasized that this was not a role that you chose for yourself or ever would have chosen for yourself, this type of up-front, outgoing woman. Did you come to enjoy going from one dinner table to another, greeting people?

S. Peltason: No. I've never been easy with it. It's not anything that's easy for me to do. It's something that I had to force myself to do, and I still do. My family always makes fun of me; I would always stay at home. Jack is a constantly on-the-go person. When we go abroad I always say, "I'd really like a child to go along with us, someone to take care of grandpa, so I don't have to go." "Okay, where are we going to go now?" His sister and mother were both that way too. You'd come in from something, and they'd say, "What are we going to do next?" [laughter] I always stay home. I would never--well, I say this because I've had so much chance to go out. Probably if I'd had a whole lifetime of being in four walls I'd say I wanted to go out, but I've had plenty of chance to go out.

I was very, very shy. I've been amazed at how many people say they're shy, people you'd never think of, and they feel shy on their insides, and you wouldn't ever know. So many theater people say that there is something to do with putting on somebody else's persona, because they are shy people, but even so, when you see them on TV interviews as themselves, they still seem outgoing. Maybe they've learned how to do the talking.

It seems to me the secret is always to be more interested in other people than you are thinking about yourself and what kind of impact that you might make or how you look. I don't really think, at least that I'm aware, that I'm worried about whether I'm going to say something stupid. Well, I do worry about that. I have kind of an inferiority complex. I had plenty of reason to feel inferior when we went to Smith College, and the women there were very bright, and I was so very sheltered. I was so out of it. With the kind of upbringing I had, I didn't know how to make not only small talk, but big talk. I didn't know how to make any kind of talk. I couldn't think what to say, and they were so articulate and smart and well read.

Lage: This is the faculty wives?

S. Peltason: The women at Smith College. There were a lot of very bright women there, because many of the husband-wife teams were both professors. Smith was one of the few places where women could teach. As spouses of professors, the nepotism laws kept them from being hired at almost any state university.

Lage: So you had a lot of women faculty?

S. Peltason: A lot of the women were professors. In other ways, too, it was just a very sophisticated place. I feel that now when we go and visit Tim at Wellesley. Our son has the same type of atmosphere at Wellesley, which is a little like Smith. I mean they are both women's colleges.

**Staff at UC Irvine, The Office of the President, and Blake House: "The Best Part of All about the Job" ##**

S. Peltason: I was looking at your outline, and there must have been a question on my favorite part of the job, because I have a note: "The best part of all about the job is the people you get to know and especially the people you work with." That's been true all through. I had four different secretaries during the time we were at UCI. I got very close to all of them and still am close to a couple of them.

Lage: Do you want to mention a few names here?

S. Peltason: Linda Wallace. Joan Chantiles, who is now Joan Rubio. Judy Talley, who came up to be in Ron Brady's office at the Office of the President, the one who accused Ron of kissing her in the elevator or something. [laughter]

Lage: She had been your social secretary?

S. Peltason: She was my social secretary. I met her, hired her--a very pretty person and very charming person. Erin Wolf, who I just saw last week, now Erin Miller. Erin was the last one, and the one who lived in our house when we came up to the president's office.

Lage: They would help you plan events, and would they also be there to help facilitate the social events?

S. Peltason: Yes. That's part of the job that they would do. They would be there for the event, too. At Blake House, Carolyn [Binger] was doing all that during the unhappy time, which was brought on almost entirely by one person, Lance Williams [*San Francisco Examiner* journalist].

Carolyn was my psychiatrist and my counselor. I'd go down and talk to her. Ah, a lovely person. I hired her when we came because Pat Johnson left when the Gardners left. I did advertise the position and had fifty or sixty responses. I interviewed about five or six people. Carolyn seemed to me to be the best. She became a close friend; I couldn't have done it without her.

There was Leslie, who had a sad ending. Leslie was the housekeeper. It turned out that she was a pathological liar, which we hadn't known, and also she just wasn't very



bright. We didn't understand that at first. We kept believing things, and all the stories she told us about her children and everything about her life. It turned out that all the time she was working at Blake House she was also collecting unemployment from some other job. She claimed that--it was quite a likely story--the check kept coming and as long as the check came, she'd cash it, and she just didn't know. I don't know if she had any feeling that she was doing anything very wrong or very sneaky. I don't know how they found out about Leslie; it was after I left. Carolyn had all kinds of things and issues, and she protected me from them very well. A lot of issues with Leslie.

But Leslie was remarkable. I mean, she did it all. When we had a big party, the whole conference room looked like a tornado hit it. And Leslie did everything, carried up, and washed up, and put away in about an hour. I never knew how she did it. She was about six feet two or six feet three. She was a big woman, very pretty, very attractive.

Well, the lying became too complicated. Somebody came to fix the washing machine, and Leslie came to me to get money. I wanted to give her a check, but she said "No, no." But anyway, I gave her the money in cash for the repairman, and she took the money and then told him to send the bill. A month later Carolyn told me she'd also paid the guy, and, you know, I couldn't remember.

Lage: So there was money taken?

S. Peltason: Yes. Leslie needed money all the time. She was a single mother and trying to take care of three kids.

For Jack, there was wonderful Nancy Nakayama, a marvelous person. Pat Pelfrey, Cindy [Cynthia] Pace, and Cecile Cuttitta were others. Wonderful people. All those were from the Office of the President.

Lage: Did they also help you with things?

S. Peltason: Carolyn was in close touch with them, about running the house, of course, which was really a nuisance. I think UC Berkeley didn't like to have to take care of Blake House. I don't blame them. We'd call, and they'd say, "We're going to come." But they'd also say, "We don't like to come to your house, because we never get paid for what we do."

Lage: These are people from the Berkeley campus?

S. Peltason: Yes, from the physical plant. When we had work that had to be done, often there was an outside contractor, because the people from the Berkeley campus wouldn't come. We had a very talented electrician of whom I was very fond, and he was on the Berkeley staff. He gave me a number where I could reach him directly, and he always came right away. I had him and his wife to a Super Bowl party at the house.

Lage: Now, why would they not get paid?

S. Peltason: Well, the people on the Berkeley payroll had to submit vouchers or something for what they did out here. The whole Blake House was taken care of by the Berkeley campus accounting office. People would say, "Well, if we do other work on the Berkeley campus we get paid, but it's slow if we do anything out at Blake House." I don't know, three months, six months. [laughs]

Lage: Oh, that explains it.

S. Peltason: But anyway, there was a lot of business stuff that Carolyn had to take care of, and Cindy and Cecile, too. Mostly it would be things they were doing for Jack, but they would also be notifying me. I can't remember why we'd be in touch with them, because they didn't do anything about the parties or anything about the social life, but we were in constant contact with Nancy Nakayama because of Jack's calendar.

### **More on Entertaining and Civic Activities in Irvine**

Lage: Let's stay with UCI for a while here.

S. Peltason: I've got written here, "During that one year that we lived in Galaxy Drive house we had several parties for student groups and a lot for special organizations like Town and Gown, Faculty Associates, the UCI Management Institute, and so forth. Mostly we had small dinner parties, twenty-four guests from community groups, who were selected by John Miltner, vice chancellor for advancement. Of course, we always had a few faculty members to those parties." I never tried any other large scale parties for the faculty--this is after my alphabetical debacle--"And after that first year, in our small house I never had the opportunity again."

Lage: When you moved to the small house this kind of entertaining stopped, or did you carry it on?

S. Peltason: Well, we just had to have it in different places. We just tried to find other venues on the campus.

The big donors lived in enormous and gorgeous houses themselves. If you're invited to somebody's home, the feeling is they've done you a favor, they've had you to their home. If it's a nice house or if it's a famous house for some reason, it's fun, and you like to go. But if in turn, they're invited to a party at the University Club, they again do us a favor to come rather than our doing something nice for them. We had a few events at hotel private dining rooms, but they were so expensive. We really didn't have the budget for that. If we wanted to do a really nice event at a hotel, like those people themselves did when they entertained, it would have cost a fortune to do it.

Lage: So it's a very expensive proposition to keep up this level of entertaining?

S. Peltason: Yes, and not really worth the doing of it. We didn't anymore have those small parties. I had one; Mrs. Smith gave us some money for the eye clinic down there, and I remember she was a woman in her middle nineties I think. I do remember that the alumni house there had a nice room, kind of like a living room with a fireplace. We set up a dinner party for her there to thank her for something she'd given us.

I had one or two like that, but mostly--. I had one for the Bonneys and the McGaughes at the Four Seasons, took them for dinner at the Four Seasons, just six of us. It was nice but not as nice as it would have been to have a small group in a beautiful chancellor's house.

Lage: I bet you still kept pretty busy with this.

S. Peltason: Yes, I was always busy. My modus operandi when I went back to Irvine was to do the same things I had done at Illinois. I thought I should join every support group and pay the regular dues, which I did. When I was invited to the board meetings, I tried to go.

Lage: What boards were these?

S. Peltason: I liked to do the Town and Gown board. I went to the board meetings of the Faculty Associates, which is the wives' faculty group. I went to meetings of Friends of the Arboretum. Those support groups had fundraisers for various departments. There was the Friends of the Arboretum, Friends of the Library, Friends of the Medical School--it was called something different, Research Associates--Boosters of UCI Athletics. They were important enough fundraising groups that the advancement office had a representative to help with each of those groups. UCI provided secretarial services if they wanted a bunch of letters sent out, or an event planned or something like that.

The Faculty Associates, the wives' group, had very few of the resources that most other groups had. They weren't fundraising for the university. They were marginal, trying to improve the quality of life for the faculty, especially for new faculty. I could really help them a lot by making my secretary available to them. When they wanted the names of the new faculty members, that's always hard to get. It was because I went and asked, "Will you give them to us?" whereas when one of the wives went to ask, they were told, "That's private information, we can't give that out." So there were a lot of ways that I could help them, and I did quite a lot.

The way I got to know people was through all of those different support groups, and townspeople, too. It was a real advantage to go to Irvine having been before; there were really a surprising number of people still there from the sixties.

Lage: So it wasn't like coming anew?

S. Peltason: It wasn't like being on a new campus, which was the same thing at Illinois when we went back as chancellor; we had been there.

### An Aside on Friendships between Faculty and Administrators

Lage: Is it hard to make friends as the chancellor's wife?

S. Peltason: I don't think so. I've heard other people say that, but I don't--. To me, the biggest difficulty was that right away when Jack became a dean at Illinois, I had this feeling--we didn't lose any real friends; we kept the same friends all those years and all the years he was chancellor, but maybe there was a "we" and a "they," which we had always felt when we were faculty. We were the "we," and the administrators who didn't ever do anything quite right, who never understood how the faculty felt, were "they." The "we" always felt that the "they" didn't really understand. And then when we became a "they" I thought we'd still be "we," and we weren't so much. Although, as I say, our friends still remain that and will be our friends for the rest of our lives. They had been with us when we were all "we" together, knowing that we saw all of these gaps in understanding by the administration, you know, "Why don't they just do this? Why don't they do that?"

Lage: Yes, you had all talked about it.

S. Peltason: Jack is not very patient about--he didn't go back and explain to all of them. If there was someone whom he regarded highly and they asked him why a certain action was taken or decision made he would tell them, but he didn't go back justifying his actions to them all, and I kept trying to. When we were "they," we just decided of course that the "we's" didn't understand the complications of administering a campus. But some of the faculty people at Illinois thought that Jack really didn't understand the life of the intellectual or how faculty felt, that he was looking at it from an administrator's point of view. For that reason there's a little separation.

Of course, Irvine was so different because he was an administrator all the time we were there. I think that you can make friends any time, and a lot of people do. Betty Corbally--her husband was president of U of I from about 1971 to 1978--always felt that she couldn't, that it was "lonely at the top," and all that. I never really felt like I was at the top. I don't know what that feeling is, being at the top.

Lage: Maybe it's an attitude.

S. Peltason: Maybe the administrator himself is more aware of being isolated at the top, although I don't think Jack really was. There's always some group that you're cronies with, the other people that you're working with. I don't think top has any single person. Jack was just working with all of these people in the office and all of the regents. I know

that the regents were "the boss," but I never really thought that Howard Leach or Meredith Khachigian or any of our friends on the board were treating Jack as an employee.

Lage: Neither one of you really seem to have a hierarchical view of life.

S. Peltason: If you felt that way it would be hard to make friends, because you'd always be thinking, "Oh, maybe they want me because of my husband's position."

### Creating the Book, *UCI: The First 25 Years*

Lage: Let's talk a little bit about some of the things you did. We've discussed your role as chancellor's wife, but let's discuss that beautiful book on UCI, on the first twenty-five years. I know you did a lot of work on that. Tell me about it.

S. Peltason: There was a wonderful photographer named Beth Koch. When we were there in the sixties she took marvelous family pictures, and we had her take some of us and our children in '67. I had been in touch with her because maybe ten or fifteen years after we had left I got a letter from her saying that she wanted to use the pictures she had taken of our two daughters for her advertising in magazines. She asked my permission, and I said sure. I asked her to send me a copy of the ad, which she did. It was a wonderful picture of Nancy and Jill that she had taken just before we moved back to Illinois in the summer of 1967.

As soon as we got back to Irvine I called her up. I wanted to be sure to keep in touch with her. I had grandchildren by then, and I said "Beth, will you come and take pictures of them?" She said of course she would.

We went and had breakfast together that morning in early 1985 at a place in Fashion Island called the Paradise Café. She was a little bit disappointed in her career. She was in on all of the original filming of the UCI campus. She had gone out and taken pictures when it was an empty place, and she had found an Indian and had a picture of him out there sitting on the land. Then she had come back and taken all these pictures all through the history of UCI, but few of them had ever been used.

I was talking to her about pictures and photography and asking whether she had met Ansel Adams that time when he had come to Irvine. We talked a little bit about Ansel Adams, and I asked, "Weren't there more pictures of UCI?" There were only about three of Adam's pictures of UCI in the book that Clark Kerr had commissioned for the Centennial in 1968. She said, "Oh yes, he took many, many pictures here." Then she told me where the Ansel Adams pictures were then.

Lage: Now they're at UC Riverside.

S. Peltason: Yes.

Lage: It may have changed.

S. Peltason: That would have been in fall of '84 or maybe '85. I said, "The twenty-fifth anniversary is coming up in 1990, and it seems like we should have something to commemorate it. We should collect these pictures." I said, "I just don't know enough about it, but I would want it to be a picture book of distinguished pictures, and I would like to use those other Ansel Adams photographs." And then I said, "Some of yours. If I do this I need somebody with a good eye. Would you help me?"

During that conversation I think I said I'd like to do a book. She did say right off, "Oh, I'd help you pick the photographs." I don't know a good photograph from a bad photograph, really.

Well, I got kind of excited about that, and soon after asked Dan Aldrich, "What do you think of this?" He said he thought it was a fine idea. I asked "Would you help? Would you look at it when I'm ready to check for accuracy?" Dan had everything in his head about the history of the campus, everything, knew all the people. Any picture you'd show him, he knew them. Students, he knew all the students. He'd even tell you where a student is now, twenty-five years later. I thought if he would go over it for us that we'd surely not have any mistakes about identifying people in pictures. He said he'd be glad to see it.

The second person I went to was Bill Pereira. He thought he had some pictures that he could give me, which had been taken during the construction. He thought that would be a great thing to do.

Then I went to Walter Burroughs. Walter was an old-time supporter of the Irvine campus. He had been a newspaperman. I don't know too much else about him. Walter was the one who told me the famous story about going in and planting a dead body. The Irvine company had several possible sites for the university, and one was the cemetery which is now Pacific View, on the crest of the hill overlooking the ocean. You know, it would have been a wonderful site. He was the one who said that somebody went out and planted a dead body out in the middle of the night.

Lage: In order to influence the site selections?

S. Peltason: Well, then it was sacred ground or something when somebody was buried there, and you couldn't--. But anyway, Walter was fun to talk to, a newspaperman. I thought he would know a lot about the early history from the perspective of an interested townsman.

After that it took me several years to get some money for the project. I went, of course, next, to John Miltner, and John said, "I don't want to do this. I'm not going to raise money for this, and what's more I don't want you to." I had gotten to know

Athalie Irvine Clarke by then, who was Joan Irvine Smith's mother, and I said, "Well, can I ask Donald Bren or Athalie?" He said, "I wish you wouldn't, because we have other plans for all of our donors, and we don't want somebody, especially the chancellor's wife, making an end-run." I asked him, "Well, how about you helping me?" "Well, sure, when I get around to it." Well, it wasn't anything that would bring money into the university coffers--.

Lage: It was not his priority.

S. Peltason: No, not at all, and understandably. So it kind of went along like that for a couple of years. It was July of '89 when I went to Ray Watson, who worked part-time at the Irvine Company and who had worked with Pereira in the original plans for the Irvine ranch. He was an architect and a planner and has had a very distinguished career. He was president of the Irvine Company at one time and was also president of the Disney Corporation; he's still involved with both. He was also a regent's professor at UCI one quarter. Ray said, "Well, that's a wonderful idea." In the meantime, Beth and I had gone to the archives in the library and gone through a lot of stuff, and she had dragged out a lot of her stuff. She and I talked all these years about pictures and how we might do it. Well, Ray Watson said, "Terrific, of course you should do this. Sure, I'll help you raise money."

He wrote a letter asking Walter Gerken if he would help, and Walter and several others wrote letters to twenty-five or thirty people. They did get maybe fifty thousand dollars. I had said I wanted the money to go for scholarships to the Alumni Association, and the Alumni Association was very enthusiastic about doing the book.

Ray Watson suggested that we get Frank McGee, who had edited a fine magazine about Orange County history. Ray said, "Frank's good; get him to do it." So then I went to Frank McGee and--.

Lage: Get him to do what?

S. Peltason: To actually write the book. I was not going to write the book myself. All this time I was just going to turn this idea over to somebody and have Beth be the photography person and Dan and Bill Pereira and Walter all checking it for accuracy. Well, so many things happened. Ray started to raise the money and I did talk to Frank McGee. Frank said he'd do it for ten thousand dollars so we were going to take some of this first money Ray raised and give it to Frank, the ten thousand. I had an outline--

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S. Peltason: I was very anxious to make the point that UC Irvine was part of the University of California, so I didn't want to start with the beginning of UCI. I wanted to start with the beginnings of the University of California, because UCI wouldn't have been a university if it hadn't been part of the University of California. There were several things I felt strongly about like that that I wanted to say.

Frank said fine, he would do that. He wrote up a little advertising brochure that the Alumni Association sent out in early 1990 to say, "Buy this wonderful book about UCI." I think we decided then to call it *The First Twenty-Five Years*, but it didn't say in the brochures that we wanted to have the twenty-fifth year celebrations in it, and so it wasn't going to be out until '91. People thought they were ordering a book that was nearly finished, and it hadn't even been started! So some people got mad and asked for their money back. Anyway, we did get in from pre-sales another--oh, ten or fifteen thousand dollars.

I gave Frank the names of some people who would advise him on particular phases of the history. I gave him some pictures Beth and I had already selected, and I had found out by then where to get the Ansel Adams photos. I gave him the outline that I had made, saying I thought it should be divided this way, but if he had other thoughts, he was to just tell me, and we'd do it his way.

So I called in maybe six months or so, and I said, "How's it going, Frank?" I kept thinking he'd come back to me and say, "Well, how about this way of organizing it or this way?" He said, "Oh, fine, I've done some preliminary work, and I'm getting together some stuff." Well, in another six months I called again. By then it was exactly a year from the time we'd signed the contract with him, which had been October '89, and I was beginning to worry about not having enough time. It was going to take us a couple of years to do this, and I wanted plenty of lead time.

When I called him in October, 1990, he gave sort of the same kind of answer. We had given him the whole ten thousand just up front, you know. I said, "Whatever you have, just bring it to me and show me." "Oh, sure." He made an appointment for the next week. He had nothing. He had not done one thing! He had not started. He had not started thinking about it! He didn't even know where some of this stuff was I had given him! [laughter]

I asked, "How are we going to do this?" When he had worked on the brochure for the pre-sale of the book, he had suggested having a time line run through the whole thing. He came to my house, and we spent maybe a month. I had him come almost every day. I'd go to my different campus events, then I'd come back. I arranged so we'd spend several hours a day.

We were not much closer to a manuscript. He was still saying: "Well, I think it'd be nice to have this time-line to run all the way through--." I said, "Fine, just do it. I mean, show me. That sounds like a good idea." He was going to run it along from page to page, and I said, "Just show me how would you integrate it with the pictures up above and the text?" I mean, it makes it a little more complicated if you're going to have that because then you have to have some kind of coordination.

Well, he didn't know exactly. I was feeling panicky because a lot of people had given money by this time. Oh, it would be such a nuisance to have to return all this money! I mean, all of the people who had bought the book. Anyway, I went up to the



communications office in Berkeley Place and spent hours and hours in the file drawers there. Frank did write a good deal, and I wrote a good deal, but I chose nearly all the pictures.

To speed up the process, I asked the people in fine arts, "Would you pick the pictures from fine arts and send over to us some you'd like; some from performing arts, something from studio arts--I just farmed out parts of it. I did the same with the medical school. I just sat there on the floor, in between those file drawers, pawing stuff out. Another thing that happened in the meantime, which was unknown to me, was that Jim Harrod, the director of the Student Union at UCI, had become interested in the Ansel Adams pictures. He got a corporation to sponsor a book called *Fiat Lux*<sup>1</sup> that would use them. My whole idea about the Ansel Adams thing was that people just seemed to have forgotten about that enormous treasure trove of Ansel Adams pictures.

Well, Jim felt the same way. I can't remember the name of the man I called at Riverside. He said, "Well, right on your own campus Jim Harrod is doing that." I said, "No! I didn't know that." And so, partly because of the time pressure, we quickly changed from this kind of book--I had thought of a picture book of distinguished photographs and UCI people and some history. Pretty quickly, I went to just trying to get pictures, just trying to do a quick history in pictures. Fortunately, Brad Atwood had saved all the early pictures in wonderful scrapbooks, and I used lots of those.

Frank did some asking around. He went and got some more pictures that were in Orange County, notably from Jim Sleeper and the Irvine Company, but mostly we used the ones in our own archives.

Lage: What about Beth's pictures?

S. Peltason: That was the other thing. Beth learned she had cancer, and by the time we had a manuscript to check, all three of my advisors had died. Beth and Bill Pereira and Walter had all died by then, and then Dan died in April of '91. I hadn't finished it then. It must have taken me all through that next year. I considered the anniversary year to go to June '91, the '90-'91 year. We had all the banners up and were calling it the anniversary year. It was in the spring that we had a big thing on campus, and I wanted to have pictures of all of that in it.

By the time I wrote the acknowledgments for the beginning, everybody had died. Beth found she had breast cancer and went to live with a daughter in San Diego. She really was not ever well enough. After she died, her son, Kent Nethery, gave me all her pictures and negatives of UCI. I went through them and picked some to use in the book. I took the rest to the UCI archivist. I have a feeling that some of her family pictures were mixed in, but the boxes were marked as pictures she had taken over the

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<sup>1</sup> *Ansel Adams: Fiat Lux: The Premier Exhibition of the University of California* (California: The Regents of the University of California, 1990).

years at UCI, and Kent felt that she would have wanted them in the UCI archives. I did use some of them, but there were hundreds to go through, and I'm sure we could have used more if she had been here to make the selections. She remembered every picture she had taken! And it was not as good a book--I mean, if they had all been able to check with me and add their perspectives, it would have been a better book, if we had had more time--. It was really not a very good or very complete book.

Lage: Just coming in from the outside, I thought it was a wonderful book.

S. Peltason: Did you?

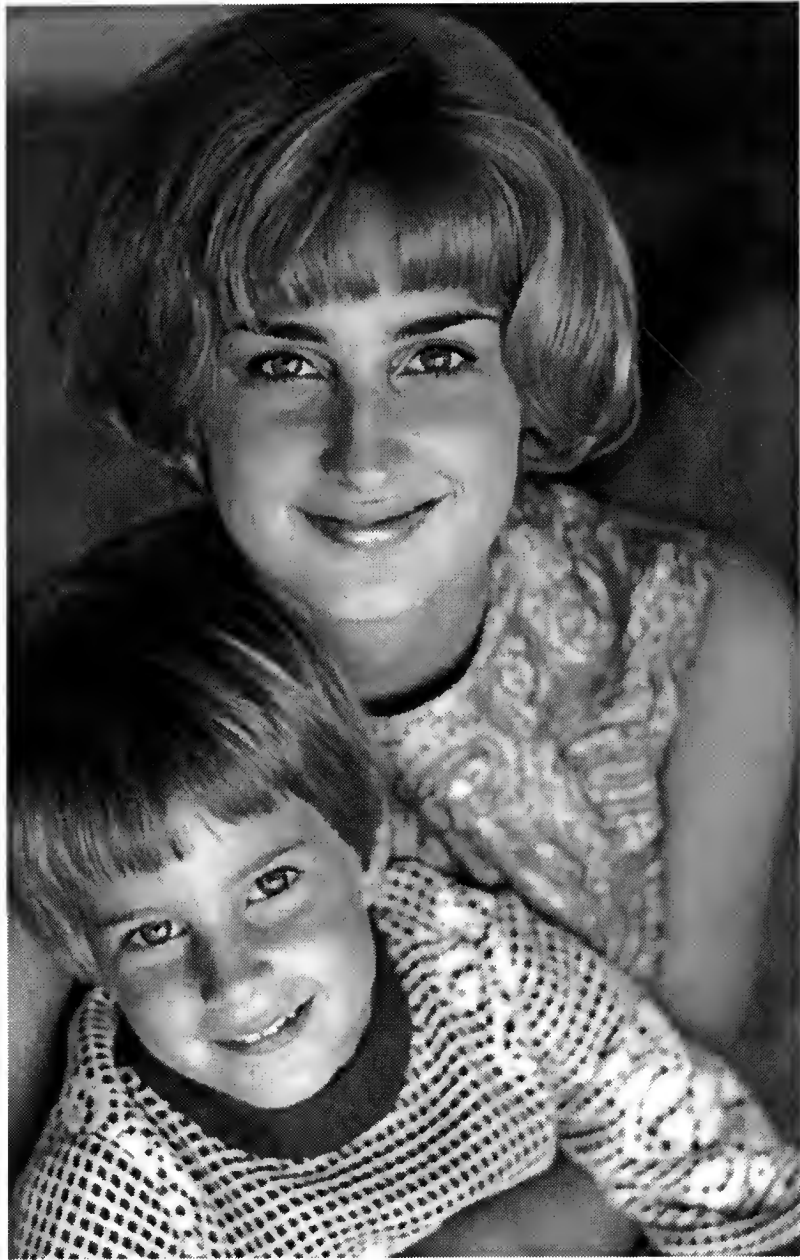
Lage: Yes, but it didn't come out quite as you had anticipated?

S. Peltason: No. The whole concept changed, the idea of distinguished photography. It ended up that the only Ansel Adams we used were the two or three that we had of UCI, and one of each of the other campuses. I called the public relations departments at each of the other eight campuses and tried to get them to tell me which Adams photo to use and what they wanted to have said about their campuses. But most of them didn't even answer.



Suzanne and Jack with Nancy, at Smith College, 1948.





Jill and Nancy Peltason, 1967.

*Photo by Beth Koch*





The Peltasons and the Tiens, at Chang-Lin Tien's inauguration as chancellor at Berkeley, 1991.





#### IV PRESIDENT'S WIFE, 1992-1995, AND RETIREMENT

##### Thoughts on Jack's Appointment as President of UC: A Time of Deep Honor and a Lost Friendship

Lage: I wanted to ask your view of Jack's being selected as president and how you felt about it.

S. Peltason: I was honored, of course. Meredith first asked him if he'd do it on March 30 [1992]. I remember it because we were in the car driving back from Santa Barbara where we had gone to visit a cousin of Jack's who was dying of cancer.

We were honored but dismayed, because we knew that almost everyone, including us, felt that it was really "Chuck's turn." We had recently been at a regents' dinner at Sue and Chuck's house, and it was clear that they felt the same way. They had, after all, been passed over twice before. When Charlie Hitch was chosen as president in 1968, Chuck was a brand new chancellor at UCLA and was very young, so he wouldn't have been a candidate then. But when David Saxon was picked from Chuck's own campus in 1975, that must have been painful. And then when David Gardner was chosen in 1983, Chuck had been an obvious candidate. I don't know exactly how long he'd been chancellor then--about fifteen years, I think --and he was doing such a great job at UCLA that I think people on the outside were surprised that he didn't get the presidency. Jack and I were at ACE then and not much tuned into California gossip.

Anyway, Jack said to Meredith, "You don't want me, Meredith. I'm too old!" and Meredith said, "No you aren't; look at Ronald Reagan," and Jack said "I AM looking at Ronald Reagan!" We all knew that hard budget times were coming up, and I think that's one reason they wanted someone for a short term, so a new person could come in after all the unpopular moves were made and start with a clean slate. Of course, if you pick someone when he's seventy, you know he's not going to be there very long!

But to go back a little and to get the sequence right, I'll refer to my calendar book for 1992. The first inkling I had that there was even a remote possibility that the regents might be considering Jack was on the way home from a dinner party on March

6 at Meredith and Ken Khachigian's home in San Clemente for ex-Governor Deukmejian. The dinner had been planned for a long time, but for some reason Jack was called out of town. David Gardner was one of the guests, and he was staying in a hotel in Orange County because he had business down here. He offered to drive me down so I wouldn't have to drive alone. On the way home we talked about how hard it was for him to be alone, and I asked him whether he was dating yet, and he said he was just starting. I asked if it was hard on his girls, and he said yes, it was, and hard on him too. Before she died, Libby had told the family that they all had to carry on with their lives. They were all trying very hard to do that, as she would have wanted.

In the course of that conversation, when we were driving back, he said something like, "You know, the regents are looking to Jack now." I took that to mean that they were looking to Jack for advice--he had talked to the committee several times, pushing Chuck's candidacy--and perhaps meaning that if Jack had been younger, he would have been a candidate. I said that was very flattering and nice, but I thought they had a terrific candidate in Chuck. He was a good age. He was mature enough to have been around, and he knew the system so well, yet he was young enough that he'd bring a lot of energy to it and still had ten years or so that he could be in the job. And that was all that was said about it. Then maybe a couple of weeks later Roy Brophy was on our campus for something, and I heard him say to Jack, "Jack, your boy [Chuck] isn't going to get it. You might as well stop talking about that." Afterwards I said to Jack, "Well, is that--?" He said, "Well, Roy is on the committee, but he's only one person. I don't know whether they all feel that way." It was still sort of a shock [laughs] when it came, because of his being seventy, not because I didn't think he could do it, because except for his age Jack was such an obvious candidate. I didn't even know whether they had candidates from outside. I really didn't pay much attention.

Lage: You didn't follow the process?

S. Peltason: No, I don't know that I would have. Usually there's some article in the paper about people being interviewed. I don't really remember seeing any of those, and Jack hardly ever mentioned it. Anyway, when it did happen, I remember thinking, "Oh, dear." Sue had been--we had known each other a long time by then, before ACE.

Maybe I saw Sue once or twice when we were in Irvine in the sixties, but then through the years--Jack was chancellor at Illinois and Chuck was chancellor at UCLA. Our daughter Nancy was at UCLA, so we'd hear about him. She said, "Oh, the kids love Chuck. He comes out to the rallies." He had a good relationship with the students, which was important in the late sixties, when he started.

I think maybe he started that job a little after Jack started at Illinois. Do you remember which year he started? Was it '68? I think maybe the next year.

Lage: I think that was about it.

S. Peltason: Yes. They were new chancellors together, and there were many, many national meetings, and so we saw them a lot. We met in Jamaica one time, and we met in Canada one time. I didn't go, but they had meetings in Europe and Germany. Chuck and Sue went to a lot of the international meetings. They went to the AAU and the NASULGC meetings and all of those. Sue was always involved in some kind of wives' organization, or something for the wives to do when we went to all of those meetings, so that we weren't sitting in the hotel room or having to go out and sightsee on our own.

Gradually it changed over the years from going on shopping trips or lunch trips, or art galleries, to having more substitutes. You know, there was a whole shift in what women were supposed to be interested in. I don't know if there was a difference in what they really were interested in. I think everybody liked fashion shows, but it had become a no-no to have a fashion show, you know? Implying that the women didn't bother their pretty little heads about anything important.

In fact, most of us had to dress, and a lot of us had never paid any attention to fashion. I hadn't, and I still don't. I really needed a lot of advice. I mean, I didn't know what was in and what was out. Things like the length of hems. Are we up above the knees or down below the knees? Things like colors; I hadn't paid any attention to that either.

Sue was always kind of in the vanguard, but then by the time we'd been co-chancellors' wives for eight years she had spoken rather bitterly to me about Maggie Johnson, who was the Kerrs' social secretary. She was there when David and Libby first came. She was an old Cal alumna. She had been a Cal person for a long time, active in the Section Club for a long time and knew a lot of the people there. She went around the country giving speeches about how to entertain and how to manage the president's house. It was Kay Kerr and Maggie who first started making the role of the chancellor's or the president's spouse really a job.

Lage: I didn't realize Kay had been active.

S. Peltason: Yes. She spoke at that ACE meeting in Florida in 1972 that I described earlier. That was the beginning of consciousness-raising about the role of the administrative spouse, especially wives, because nearly all the presidents and chancellors were men then. Before that we were just supposed to go along and do--.

Lage: Did this ring a bell for you?

S. Peltason: Oh, yes, just like the first time I read Betty Friedan.

Lage: You talked about that last time, how strongly you felt when you first read Betty Friedan.

S. Peltason: Yes.

Lage: And this had the same effect?

S. Peltason: This was the same kind of thing. When women started pushing, after the early fifties, all over the place: employment as lawyers and doctors, and all the women saying, "We can do that. We can do that." [laughs] All the jokes about how Ginger Rogers did all the dances that Fred Astaire did, but did them all backwards and in high heels [laughter]. It was an interesting time. It was a respectable thing to talk about. I wouldn't have thought of asking for a secretary before that. I thought that would have been self-indulgent. Before, you didn't want to be pushy. You didn't want to be the one that the staff would be rolling their eyes about, "Oh, Mrs. Peltason wants this; she wants that." But after that I became much less shy about asking for help. It was all beginning then.

I had been with Sue enough that she had expressed to me not personal bitterness to Libby, but just kind of resistance to being led. I mean, whatever Libby would try to arrange for us when we'd go up to a regents' meeting, you always had the feeling Sue was saying, "I could do this a lot better," whatever it was. I knew she was not that way. She was very accepting and sisterly with all of the chancellors' wives. It was just whoever was in the role as the president's wife. It was an office that she resented. I hadn't worked out in my head that some of this resentment was because she really thought she should be there herself, but I did feel that it wasn't personal that she disliked that person.

She was very bitter about Maggie, who was the one who got all the flak. When there was an inauguration on any campus, it was very, very firmly stated that this was the president's party. The president's office paid for it, the president had chosen the chancellor, and the president was inaugurating him. The party would be held on your campus, and you were to tell him which people from your campus to invite. The president would arrange it. He would decide where it was going to be, or, rather, his representation would.

So Maggie would come down to the campus. "Okay, now we're going to do this and this." Sue was probably around thirty, thirty-two when Chuck was inaugurated, and maybe Maggie did come down and do it. I don't know. Sue would have then just gone along with whatever somebody else told her to do. But she had heard plenty of criticism of the president's office from the Murphys, of course. Franklin had fought Clark all the way.

As Sue watched it over the years, she became very resentful. She said, "This is my campus. I'm the boss here." She always insisted on doing all the seating arrangements at the tables for the regents' meeting and would say, "When the regents' meeting is held here, I do that."

She would say "It's my dinner party. I have it at my house," and she always expressed to me how resentful she was that they tried to come from outside to tell her, "You should have so-and-so sit here and so-and-so sit there." And so they didn't. I

mean, she was strong enough about it. She told Maggie never to set foot on her campus.

I remember when Sue had said something critical about Maggie, and I said, "Oh, Maggie died of cancer." She was--"Oh, I'm sorry. I'm sorry, but she wasn't aware of it. You know, Maggie got cancer and it took a year or so between the time we all knew and her death, and somehow or other Sue was so separated by then from the Office of the President that she didn't even know that somebody else had come along. It was Pat Johnson who went in to work with Maggie Johnson.

Lage: No relation?

S. Peltason: No relation. Just after Maggie knew she had cancer, and she wanted to turn it over. So Pat worked there and then became the secretary. That was during David's presidency.

Sue's resentment was very strong. I gradually became aware of it through the eight years, and then, by the end of Jack's eight years as chancellor, I knew--.

Lage: You knew there was going to be trouble?

S. Peltason: I knew, yes. Well, I didn't know--I thought we were such old friends. I didn't really see it coming as it hit us. The day it was announced, April 4, 1992, Chuck was there. I went and put my arm around his waist, and he put his arm around me, and I said, "This should be you. I'm sorry." He said, "No, no. Jack will be do a fine job." I asked, "How is Sue?" and he said, "Call her. Call her." I said, "I thought maybe this wouldn't be the best time to call her," and he said, "Yes, call her. She's at home." I guess we were just on our way to the airport, and so I went to an airport telephone, and I called her and said, "Sue, I just wanted to tell you it's all done. It's been announced, but you know, I wanted Chuck to be the president. I just want to let you know you should be doing this, not me. You'd be much better." The first thing she said was, "Oh, Suzie, don't say that," and then she burst into tears.

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S. Peltason: Her bitterness seemed to be entirely aimed at the regents then. But hurt. You just heard the pain. It was really agonizing, but I thought she and I were okay then. I was very sorry when I heard that Chuck not only offered but almost insisted that the inauguration should be there, at UCLA, and of course Jack wanted to do whatever Chuck wanted to do about it. He knew, too, how disappointed Chuck was and how they were both really counting on it. We had been at the March regents' meeting at their house just a couple of weeks before this announcement, April 4, and Sue had taken the regent from Riverside, [Jacques] Yeager, around. He was, I think, one of the people who was not for Chuck, although I'm not sure. I didn't know how people lined up, but I remember they wanted to see the house. Sue was a very gracious hostess that time to everybody, and I remember thinking, "She'll be able to do this." She had been so critical, and I was really interested to see how she would handle the role when she

had been so critical of everyone else, of their wanting to do anything on any one of the nine campuses.

But anyway, she cried, then she said a couple of things about Jack, some implication that she didn't know exactly how it was he had gotten this. I thought there was an implication that he had been angling for this all along, which was certainly not true. I think I said, "Oh, no. Chuck was always his candidate," and she said, "Well, maybe," but she was just so hurt that I didn't really pay much attention to any specific thing she said. I just tried to mumble words of assent and sympathy and condolence.

When I got back to Irvine, there was a message on my machine, and it was Sue saying, "I'm very sorry for the way I talked to you." A very short message, and that was it. I wrote her a letter, kind of a loving letter saying how much I had admired her, and how she had been a leader in a lot of things through the years. She didn't answer that.

We had the inauguration at UCLA, and she did come to me and say, "Suzie, you look great." I thought, "Oh, well, we're okay." Well, it's not true that she never spoke to me again after that but not unless she had to. Sue didn't come to anything we had. My first time to get in touch with all the nine chancellors' wives was when I was going to plan a Women's Club thing, and the message that came back--.

I guess maybe before that Jack sent these complimentary parking passes that are given to retired people and widows of chancellors and widows of people who had been in administration on all the nine campuses and at the Office of the President. They're rather expensive things since they have to be paid for on each campus. It's just a courtesy to give them to people. Not only widows. I mean, Jack and I get them now, and they were always given to the spouses of the chancellors.

Jack sent one to Sue, and she tore it in half and sent it back, saying, "Give this to someone who needs it," or something like that. It's a pass that says you can park on any one of the nine campuses. That was one lesson in what overture not to make.

But then I wrote to Sue. Of course, anything I sent to the other eight chancellors' spouses I had to send also to Sue, or at least I had to at the beginning. When I was having this faculty wives' groups event at Blake House, the message came back from Sue Young's secretary to Carolyn, saying, "I don't approve, and I never approved of the president's wife coming down to the campus and telling the chancellors' wives what they should do. I don't approve of this, and I would not want to be part of it under any circumstances." It wasn't just a "No, thank you. I can't come," you know?

Lage: What was the affair? Were you inviting faculty wives from all the campuses?

S. Peltason: I invited anybody who wanted to come to represent the faculty wives' clubs, and the meeting was to talk about what problems we were all having together. The wives' groups used to be "social clubs" during the daytime. We were having trouble with

membership. They usually wanted to talk about programming, what would attract the young women. Almost all of them had fundraisers for scholarships, so they liked to exchange ideas about fundraisers.

I sent my dues and joined all nine, and I sent something to the scholarship fund on all nine campuses. I asked if they would like to meet, and they did come. The northern campuses take turns every year hosting a meeting, either Berkeley or San Francisco or Davis or Santa Cruz hosts a meeting when the wives' groups from the other three campuses are invited. They sort of use that to showcase their own campus.

This one at the president's house, and the ones that I had, when I was in the south with all of the campuses, had traditionally talked about women's club troubles and the exchange of ideas. We traditionally had one special speaker. At Davis one time it was on financial planning for women. One time it was about breast cancer and women's health. We usually had one other speaker. We would have workshops, and that was the purpose of this.

Jack and I tried to have quite a few things at Blake House to which we could invite all nine campuses. I remember I had one event with Jacques Derrida, the deconstructionist [laughs].

Lage: Did you understand him?

S. Peltason: He's such a sweet man. I remember him dearly, yes. He's a lovely man. He's given me copies of all his books with very flowery inscriptions, all in French, which Tim read and said, "Does he have a crush on you or something?" [laughs] I said, "No, he's just that way. He's just such a lovely, sweet man."

When we hosted that meeting for the philosophers and English professors on the eight comprehensive campuses, the system was in such pain because of the drastic budget cuts. Berkeleyites immediately said, "Let the rest of those people go! Just forget them." [laughs] "You know what the jewel in your crown is. Protect the jewel. Never mind what has to happen to the others. This is crisis time."

I remember that the people from Santa Cruz or Irvine talked to a few Berkeley people, who immediately expressed this view that if you had just a little bit of money to give, give it where it's important, not to these little satellite campuses. The others were just appalled. They all sat there with their mouths hanging open. They couldn't really believe that the Berkeley people said that, but the people from Berkeley were very open about it. It just seemed so obvious to them.

I had one woman in the wives' club explicitly tell me that, "You talk about excellence. Looking around the system, it doesn't take long to see where the excellence is and protect it," and I said to her the same thing, "We can't, you know--. Jack's president of all nine campuses." But secretly, the president and the Board of Regents, they always have some kind of resource. When people really need something

on a campus--if you need some extra money for the salary for a star and you're trying to get somebody here--they can nearly always dig around and find it somewhere. I suppose this is true at most administrative levels.

There were all kinds of ways of trying to support the Berkeley campus and others, too. Yes, a little extra money would be found anyplace where it was needed, but there were ways of giving them more support than was just printed in the papers.

Anyway, when I had the wives' meeting when Sue said that she didn't approve of the president telling the chancellors' wives what to do--. Of course, there wouldn't have been any of that. It was to get together to exchange information. It wouldn't have been anything like me saying, "We should do this or this or this," obviously. She would have known that, knowing me as long as she had, but all of that resentment that she had always had against the president's office was transferred to me. I thought that it wouldn't be. I thought that we had known each other too long, but she was just too hurt; it was too much pain.

Lage: When did Sue become ill? Was it while Jack was still president?

S. Peltason: I don't know. I wouldn't have heard. We were not in touch with them, though of course Jack and Chuck worked together. We would get news from other people. Maybe toward the end of Jack's time? I don't know when she discovered she had cancer. I was really interested, and I would ask other wives for a while. Jean Aldrich was sort of out of touch, too. I don't know if there was anybody that I could always ask in Irvine. Jack would call Gloria Stypinski at UCLA. The people who worked with Chuck were wonderful to Jack, but there were really very many awkward times for us on the UCLA campus, and I just got so I didn't go.

Lage: How did Jack's inauguration go for you?

S. Peltason: The three children came, which was nice for us. Austin Ranney came and took pictures of us. Lucius Barker, one of Jack's favorite students, his first graduate student at Illinois and now a holder of a distinguished chair at Stanford, came and gave the inaugural address. So it was a time to see old friends.

Sue didn't come, although she came to the dinner the night before that the regents gave someplace on the UCLA campus. It was up in some canyon or something. We were all dressed like cowboys and cowgirls. A very nice party. She said that to me, "You look nice"--or maybe that was the night of the inaugural dinner--but that was the only time we spoke, then, for the next several years. I got so I just didn't go to the AAU meetings because she had always been active there, and it was so uncomfortable. I mean, any group I was in, she'd walk away from.

It was very awkward. Every now and then, I'd see Chuck watching, and she would make an effort. She would look over at him and then say something to someone in the group, but then she'd leave. We never did have a conversation with each other after



that. I think I wrote maybe one other time, right at the beginning, but she didn't answer.

After that time she said, "I don't want to have anything to do with the president's office." I felt that it was awkward to ask all the chancellors' wives and not ask Sue, but she was so explicit that I'd just be pestering her if I invited her to each thing. I said, "Ask specifically if we could have that in writing. Ask the secretary to email that to us, or fax it up, and I'm going to put it in the file," to be an explanation of why, then, I didn't ever ask Sue for anything else, or UCLA for anything else, that I ever did at Blake House.

The answer came back, "No, she would not--."

Lage: Oh, she wouldn't put in writing.

S. Peltason: She wouldn't put it in writing, so I don't have any record of it, which I sort of wanted, just to protect myself. I knew I wouldn't be there long, and I thought if there were later complaints that UCLA was left out of something, I wanted to show why, but anyway, I don't know if it ever came up.

Lage: Now Chuck has a presidential job, where?

S. Peltason: University of Florida at Gainesville. He said, when he took that job--it was in the paper--that his wife was doing well then, that he wouldn't have taken it if she hadn't been. So, I guess it's in remission again. We've heard bad things a couple of times, as though we couldn't hope for any other remission, but I hope now that they've made such enormous strides in the chemo. I don't know what kind of prognosis she has, and Gloria doesn't usually mention that. I mean, she just tells us, "Things are worse now," or "She's out of the hospital," or "Things are looking better now." She probably didn't know the details. With all the options in chemo and radiation, it's so complicated these days.

Lage: Yes.

S. Peltason: But that--and Joan Hullar's hurt, which was equally deep--that was the worst thing about the job, much worse than the papers attacking Jack, although that was bad enough.

But, actually, the first question that started all of this--I was pleased that Jack was appointed. I mean, I wasn't happy for Chuck's sake--.

Lage: But were you pleased--to leave Chuck and Sue out of it--were you pleased that you had this opportunity?

S. Peltason: Yes. Of course, like Chuck and Sue in 1992, in 1971 I thought that Jack would have been a great president of the University of Illinois, and I thought he would be asked to

do that. At least I thought there was a good chance. I wasn't counting on it, but I really thought he would, and Jack Corbally was selected instead. It wouldn't have occurred to us, as a matter of pride, to show any disappointment. And probably that was true with the Youngs when David Saxon was chosen, and also when David Gardner was chosen. They probably carried on as if it was fine with them. I think pride would have prevented me from letting anybody know how disappointed I was about anything. Now, Gordon Gee refused the job [the offer of the UC presidency, in 1995], so obviously some people don't think it's the best job in the world. I think that he refused because of his wife; I don't think he would have refused it if he hadn't had a new wife, and she didn't want to move.

But most people would be honored to take it. I think you could argue that the presidency of Harvard is probably the top job in education in the United States, but of all public universities, this job is the top job in the United States and the world maybe. It's gratifying. Jack is so low-key. His whole demeanor is so low-key, and his style of leadership is so understated, and so "go along and get along," and "don't rock the boat," but he's very creative. Also, he's so likely to give other people credit for things that are entirely his own idea. Maybe he'll work them out with somebody else, but I'm always pleased when people do see that he was the source of a new idea. Often they don't, and he doesn't tell them.

I think one reason Jack wasn't chosen at Illinois is I think they didn't see him as a charismatic type who would be an eloquent spokesperson for the university. Although Dave Henry, his predecessor, wasn't a charismatic person, either. Jack Corbally was much more that type, big, with a big voice.

Jack had been at Illinois for ten years as chancellor. He had been there a total of twenty-three years in all; nine as a professor and four as a dean. So they knew his work, and he was very popular in the faculty. He got hundreds of letters of support from the faculty. Hundreds, you know. A bunch of letters, anyway. [laughter] A lot of people were saying to us, "Oh, we thought it was going to be you," which, of course, people will say after the fact. Jack Corbally did a very good job, and we became good friends. He hadn't been at Illinois; he had been president at Syracuse, and before that was in the administration at Ohio State. Sometimes it's better for an inside person, then there are times when it's good to bring somebody in from the outside, and the Illinois trustees judged 1971 to be one of those times.

Lage: Some people believe in it.

### **Budget Crisis, a Tapped Meeting, and Press Leaks**

S. Peltason: This time in California, with the terrible budget situation, was a good time to use someone already in the system.

On April 1, Jack accepted, and on April 4, it was announced, but pretty soon after that, maybe a month later, David's retirement package was announced and the feathers hit the fan. The media had a field day with that, coming at a time of budget cuts. If David had made a gift of a million dollars to UC in Libby's name, I think it might have taken some of the heat off, but we'll never know.

Of course the money was due to him [David Gardner]. That whole package had been previously negotiated. These were the terms of his contract, except for the fact that he left a little early, and I thought, well, anybody would sympathize with him, given the circumstances, because if Libby hadn't died, they would have served out the ten years that they had planned to stay in the job. I think they had already bought a lot in Park City where they planned to build their retirement house.

Anyway, to return to the issue of the "psychic benefits" of holding a presidency, I don't think I was ever that aware of being at the top, but I was very aware that Jack had received a vote of confidence from the regents, who had offered him the presidency because they thought he could and would do a good job.

I think, too, that they wanted a low-key person, although I always argued with Jack because I didn't think he answered criticisms aggressively enough. He said, "I don't know what you're talking about. I've answered every one of them that was worth answering." We just agreed to disagree about that.

I thought the reporting was so slanted and unfair when they printed a transcript of part of the chancellors' and president's meeting in March of '94. When they taped that meeting.

Lage: It was a tapped meeting.

S. Peltason: Yes, and I guess they never did know at which site that was done or who did it, and whether it was done at Lance Williams' request, or whether some disgruntled person taped it, then sold or gave it to Williams. But for what was a relatively mild meeting, Williams managed to blow it into a cause celebre. There was a horrible cartoon of Jack pulling down the whole president's office, saying, "Keep looking, there's a bug in here somewhere." It was reported that anonymous sources close to the president's office reported that he was "furious" and he ordered UC police to track down the news source who provided the transcript. Well, he wasn't all that furious, and he never did put a lot of resources into trying to find the leak. Other people in the office said, "You should really try to see where this leak came from because maybe there are a lot of other things being taped too," but he had so much more pressing business at that time.

Since it was a teleconference--to try to save money spent on all the chancellors traveling to Oakland or some other gathering point--there were all these possible locations where people could have tapped in at any one of the conference sites. Anybody who had been persuaded to do this could listen in, then tape it with a regular tape recorder, putting the microphone up to the receiver. I don't think they had

videotape, just audio. So there were a lot of possibilities, and I don't think they ever did discover where the taping happened. At least I never heard it mentioned again.

But the tone of the reporting was all off. It was just not Jack's personality at all. I mean, "the rage." He just didn't rage. He never has, it's not the way he responds to anything. Williams used words like "railed," "incensed," "enraged," "derided" to describe Jack's attitudes, and they aren't accurate pictures of the way Jack operated either in public or in private. He was portrayed as arrogant, selfish, extravagant, high-handed, which are also not qualities that anyone who knows him would impute to him.

Those meetings of the president and the chancellors were off-the-record meetings, so they didn't have their own records, and they didn't keep minutes of those meetings. They had an agenda, I think, to suggest for informal discussion of issues before the university, but the talks were just to air the feelings of the different principals, and sometimes to come to some sort of consensus.

Lance Williams was a reporter for the *S.F. Examiner*, which on Sundays combined with the *Chronicle*, so, of course, his first article appeared first in a Saturday edition, then on a Sunday a couple of weeks after the meeting. Jack claimed that the articles presented a distorted image, so on a Wednesday, Williams printed more extended transcripts of the same discussion, which of course had only the *Examiner* readership and not the larger circulation. In all his reporting, Williams decided not only to make Jack the major villain, but to make Chang-Lin [Tien] his hero. I guess he figured he had to have a hero. Of course, the president is the one that everybody loves to hate, because he has no constituency--there's no loyalty to the Office of the President and no reason why there should be. I mean, people have loyalty to the campuses. So it's much easier to make Chang-Lin a hero for all the Berkeley people, and have Jack the villain and there was no argument that Chang-Lin was doing a good job at Berkeley and was very popular. He had been Jack's vice chancellor at Irvine and had done a great job there, so Jack recommended him without reservation to David for the job at Berkeley.

When I read the more complete transcript, I could imagine just how the discussion went. The meeting was structured so that the chancellors met with the vice presidents for about an hour, then Jack always came in later. This time he came in just as Karl [Pister] was saying how upset he was that [Lester] Lee had not been confirmed as a regent by a senate committee. The chancellors felt that it was bad timing that regents were nominated and attended meetings for nearly a year before their confirmation hearings came up because it might be more difficult to vote your conscience on an issue if you knew the legislators were looking over your shoulder, preparatory to their voting on your confirmation.

In this case, Lee had been persuaded by all the material presented to the regents by the administration that a hike in student fees was essential to maintain the quality of the institution. Ward Connerly was not persuaded. Lee voted with the UC administration, and Connerly voted against them. Connerly was confirmed, but Lee

was not--by a three-to-two vote, I think. It was a small senate committee. The senators, especially Bill Lockyer, specifically stated that through their rejection of Lee, they were sending a message to the university, which Lockyer had called "a bureaucracy out of control." When Karl asked "What can we do about Lee?" Jack said something like, "Nothing. While I don't want to see them get away with it without some kind of pain or penalty, we still have to work with them." Williams loved that "pain or penalty" remark, rightly assuming that the senators would not love it, and of course he made sure that they all heard about it.

It often took a lot of courage for regents to vote their consciences because they were frequently criticized scathingly. On the issue of fee hikes, it was a very courageous vote, for the student regent especially.

##

S. Peltason: There were a number of difficult issues for the student regents because their constituency was the other students, and they got chewed to pieces when their vote went against what the students perceived as their interests. The student regent was present for all of the discussions at the regents' meetings, of course, and he or she listened to all sides of the issues. Several times the student regent was brave enough to bite the bullet and vote for raises in the tuition, even knowing that he/she would have to go back and explain the vote to the other students and be crucified in all the campus newspapers. And then the way the whole thing was pursued--. According to Lance, Chang-Lin was the only one standing up, wanting to save money for the university. All the rest of them, Peltason particularly, wanted to throw the money around irresponsibly. The same time that they were having the battle about the student fee, they were discussing raising an administrator's salary.

One of the issues that came before that March '94 chancellors' meeting or teleconference was when Steve Barclay--but Lance didn't name names, it was in the transcript--Steve Barclay had been asked by UC San Francisco to come as a vice chancellor for research or something. At the time he was at Berkeley. I don't even know what his field was. So that involved a move from Berkeley to UC San Francisco--all the salaries at UC San Francisco were, like, 20 percent above any other campus, of course, because they were doctors and UCSF has to compete with the open market.

This meant that Steve Barclay's salary would have jumped up twenty or forty thousand dollars--some big amount of money--to bring him into line with the other vice chancellors there. He felt he should get that, and the chancellor at UCSF felt he should get it, and Jack and the other chancellors agreed that he should. Chang-Lin said in the meeting, in this transcript, "I don't think we should give him that big raise. I just tried to give a little raise at Berkeley, and everybody, they just jumped all over me," or something like that. "There's going to be hell to pay on the campus if he gets this."

The others were saying, "Well, as a matter of equity, it's only fair that he get paid whatever the scale is over there, if he's going to take the job." I guess the chancellors can't make the final decision at that informal meeting. They just hash things out there, to be sure they're all on the same page.

Lage: Yes.

S. Peltason: When Lance first printed the history, the only thing he said was that Chang-Lin wanted to keep salaries down. He didn't say anything about who the person was, or that he was going from Berkeley to San Francisco. He just said, "They want to give this man a great big raise," and that Chang-Lin was the only one saying, "No, we shouldn't." Of course, a lot of this isn't explicit in their conversation, because they're all chancellors sitting around, and they know it's going from Berkeley to UCSF; they know what the salary scale is. They know all that stuff and so it's not all spelled out in the debate, but when he printed the more complete story, it was spelled out more fully.

But then, once the press started on that, then just everything--I mean, they wanted to know what we'd done with Blake House--and we had done practically nothing with Blake House, had spent very little money to refurbish it.

Lage: Did you feel like you were living under a microscope?

S. Peltason: Yes, but it was a hostile microscope. I mean, from 1967, when Jack started at Illinois, I had always been aware that we wanted to be careful. It really isn't just because of what the press can say. You really think, "I want to act responsibly. This is somebody else's money that I'm living with, and I want to do it responsibly and get them the biggest bang for their buck." With your own money, if you waste some, you throw something away, you consider "Oh, well, so I learned a lesson. So I did a dumb thing or I bought insurance with the wrong carrier. It would have been cheaper if I had gotten it with somebody else." You waste money of your own all the time. But if it's somebody else's money, you can't just say, "Ah, well, I learned that lesson." You're accountable to somebody, and you're always aware of that.

There had been plenty of hostility during the late sixties, not even especially from students; it had come from the students, but it came from all of the town, which would say, "You spineless, wishy-washy chancellor. Why don't you make those students behave?" A rock would come through Jack's office window. "Don't let those students throw rocks!" Good idea. [laughter] "Can you suggest to me how to keep them from throwing those rocks?"

It wasn't so different from the late sixties, because there were ad hominem attacks on Jack then, too, but not so many, and we always had a fairly large core of support. Jack was always careful at Illinois, especially with the faculty. He always worked a lot with the faculty to try to explain to them and to bring them along and have them be involved in decisions. He got an amazing number of faculty to stand up with him against the students in the late sixties, in the student uprising, and to go with him when

he arrested them and when they were going to prosecute and in trying to decide on a fair way to discipline them. "Prosecute" is probably the wrong word, because it wasn't a legal procedure. I guess there was one legal suit.

### **The Timing of Jack's Retirement and the Affirmative Action Controversy**

Lage: Did you have any role in the timing of Jack's retirement? Did you two talk about it?

S. Peltason: Yes, we talked about it quite a bit. Someone asked, "Did you want him to retire?" and I said, "Oh, yes, I wanted him to retire while we were still young enough to play shuffleboard on the cruise boat," or something like that. I had said that to him, but actually, truth be told--I don't know whether even Jack would know this--but at that time I wanted him to stay on a little longer. When it came January--he had done really a marvelous job with Governor [Pete] Wilson--I mean, Governor Wilson was sympathetic. All except for the affirmative action thing, when he really axed us, but he was a good governor to work with.

Jack had worked out that agreement for the UC budget, the four-year plan or something. They were working on that, and I thought there were some signs that the California economy was getting better. I had felt very strongly when we started this thing, "Just do this three years." Jack said it was for three to five years, but I said, "Make it three."

When the time came to announce if we were going to quit at the end of three years, things were getting a little bit better, but we'd had such a horrible time from that one event. It was that one taping that soured us. And then Quentin Kopp was really mean. He said mean things, and some of the others did, too, although when Jack would go over and talk to them personally they'd say, "Oh, well, we don't really hold it against you." But I could see that the budget was just beginning to get better, and I thought, "Oh, I would like Jack to have a couple of the good years."

Lage: Yes. He really didn't.

S. Peltason: The affirmative action thing just blew sky high in July, and when we left in October there were still many simmering ill feelings. I thought that Jack really worked well with Ward [Connerly]. His argument with Ward was "The state ballot is going to do this anyway. It's going to be on the ballot. You know how people are going to vote, considering how they voted on Proposition 187." People were not going to vote for affirmative action; they were going to vote Ward's way. The university was not really the proper place to have as the battlefield. I remember Jack saying in February after a conversation with Ward, "I have a fifty-fifty chance. Ward is considering--." Right after he told me that I picked up the paper and read that Pete Wilson was going to run for president [of the United States], and I thought, "That cooks it." [laughs]

Obviously, the stand against affirmative action was something that he would use, because it was popular with the voters.

Unhappily enough, the polls don't seem that sure right now, but I think maybe a plebiscite in any state would have many white people who feel that their own children are disadvantaged by affirmative action. In fact, a faculty member sitting next to me at dinner at Blake House said that his child hadn't gotten into some program and that a black kid that they knew had been accepted. I asked, "Do you really think it was that black child who took your child's spot?" I mean, their child probably wouldn't have gotten in anyway. A lot of people didn't get in anyway under selective admissions.

But as soon as it was affirmative action then they all said it was the minority people, of whom there were relatively few, that kept their child out. I mean, there'd be a 1,000 applicants for twenty spots, and they'd think it's the minority student that kept them out. It was a very common feeling. So when Pete Wilson was running for president, he was going to use that nationwide, and I must say I think I did Ward an injustice at the time. I sort of thought to myself, "Well, I'll bet you that this really was his conviction, but that when Wilson put him on the Board of Regents the understanding was that he would carry this and that Ward was doing it out of loyalty to Wilson, proposing it and also insisting that it be played out in the University of California Board of Regents instead of letting it happen in open election, on a regular California ballot."

But I guess now I've heard so many of Ward Connerly's speeches on other college campuses, and I read his book. He's a smart man, and an articulate man, and I'm persuaded that he really believes it. It's now a kind of a campaign of his own, quite obviously apart from Wilson's.

Lage: It does seem that way.

S. Peltason: Ward and Jack were always fond of each other personally and treated each other with great respect even in their bitterest debate. Jack knew it [the affirmative action debate] was going to tear everything apart, and he kept saying, "This is not the right place for this." He argued it hard, but they didn't ever get into any kind of personal abuse.

Anyway, when the time actually came in the fall to decide about announcing Jack's retirement for the next year, I agreed with Meredith. I said, "Well, put off deciding until January." Then in January, he really just didn't want to have anything to do with it by then. It didn't make any difference what I said, so I never said, "Don't do it." I didn't say, "Don't quit." But by then I was kind of wishing that he could have a couple of easier years, and it looked like he might. Then along about six months after he announced his retirement, the whole affirmative action thing broke. Oh well, who knows? It might have lasted another couple of years.



### **Entertaining Obligations as President's Wife**

Lage: Was part of your role to put on dinners for the regents and their wives, or was that done by the regents' office?

S. Peltason: It was done by the regents' office. Once a year we did it at Blake House, and then it was ours. Even when we had it at our house, the regents' office paid for it.

Lage: That was nice.

S. Peltason: Yes. I mean, it would have been some University of California office that would have paid for it anyway, but when it was the regents' dinner, the regents paid for it.

Lage: Did those get to be social occasions? Did people drop their formality?

S. Peltason: Yes. Oh, yes. Always pleasant occasions. Whoever has things on the agenda for that month is included in the dinner. It's always a Thursday night. Once a year they have all of the "has-beens" in the southern campuses, all of the retired administrators and members of the Board of Regents in the south. Once a year they have all the ones in the north. They have kind of a standard bunch of people that they honor. You know, January they would do--we don't call them "has-beens!" I can't think of what they call them! [laughs] Retired people or something. We just went to that one, last month in Los Angeles.

Sometimes it's just according to what's taken up at the regents' meeting that time, who you have. It was not convenient for them to have it at Blake House, because all of the business meetings were at UCSF. They had to come clear across the Bay. They had to put them in buses or something and bring them over to Blake House and then to bus them all back to their hotels. It was much more convenient for them to do it at a hotel in San Francisco. That's what they usually did.

But once a year they did it at our house. So I did three of those, I guess. There was nearly always somebody going off the board or somebody retiring, one of the Board of Regents, and for that you had a little extra to do, thanking the people. It's really a long haul, twelve years on that board--except for the alumni regents, who all come and go every year, as do the student regents. There was also always somebody to be welcoming on.

### **Taking Stock: An Inventory of Blake House**

S. Peltason: The one big thing I did there [at Blake House] that I'm proud of [laughs]--it is not a very big thing to anybody else--but when Carolyn and I went in, there was a closet

with beautiful silverware, and I said, "Oh!" Benjamin Ide Wheeler? What's Wheeler's name?

Lage: Benjamin Ide. That's right.

S. Peltason: [And she said] "Yes, this was his tea set." We had so many people in and out. I did say to Carolyn, "Okay, where's the inventory so we can check to be sure when I leave, the same things are here as when I first came." [laughs] Well, there wasn't any inventory. They didn't have any inventory! I asked, "You mean there isn't any, for all this silver and all this stuff?" There isn't much institutional memory, so that when people are gone-- Well, there were a lot of us then who still remembered '68, when Charlie and Nancy Hitch renovated the house. Thanks to the oral history done when Libby was first lady, we have some of that on record, but the Hitches borrowed stuff from the Berkeley house, and they got some things that were left to the president, and some of the things had been given by the presidents, and were sort of understood to belong to the president's residence. But really there wasn't any official inventory.

I did undertake it, and that marvelous Jackie Jones did it for me. She took pictures of everything: every piece of furniture, every piece of silverware, every rug, and she looked up the provenance of each, as much information as she could find. A lot of it Libby had bought.

Lage: Then you had that on record.

S. Peltason: Dining room tables and chairs were expensive. As much as Jackie could, she tried to find out where things had come from. We found a lot of bills for furniture that had arrived in the last ten years. Then there were old files just stuffed with junk. I used to get really absorbed in it. I'd haul them out, all of Nancy Hitch's letters to the architect --.

It was really fun. It was really interesting. They're all still there stuck in the drawers! You know, they're going to burn up some day or they'll all get thrown out someday.

### **Views on the Press; An Aside on Living in the Bay Area ##**

Lage: Earlier, you were talking about how you didn't think that Jack was aggressive enough in answering the press.

S. Peltason: Yes. I felt very defensive. I didn't like the idea of people thinking he was a cheat and a liar. When he spoke personally to the senators, they'd say, "Oh, well, that's really not such a big thing; we don't hold it against you." But it seemed to me so odd that that phrase, some "pain or penalty"--it's probably even from constitutional law or

someplace, about pain or penalty--caused such a violent reaction. It's ridiculous. Rollin Post, a veteran political reporter on radio did say, "This is a tempest in a teapot. . . . Whether the chancellors meet privately with the president doesn't seem very important, and, certainly, whether they were critical of some politicians in Sacramento seems to be rather normal. . . . But maybe I'm missing something." [Rollin Post, KRON radio, March 25, 1994]

I thought the whole approach to the press accusations should have been, "We didn't say anything that was--." There could have been all kinds of things they could have said. It could have been that they sat around and told dirty jokes. I think there were a lot of things that would have been more embarrassing and a lot worse.

We got a letter from Lance Williams the night before he put all this in the paper, saying, "Some tapes have come our way from your meeting, and we think they cast an interesting perspective on the way the Office of the President does business," or something like this. It was the night before it was going to be published. "And if you have anything to say, say it now."

Of course, the article was in and type-set, and there wasn't any way for Jack to answer it. It was just kind of a threat.

Lage: Did Jack ever have a sense of what Lance Williams's gripe was?

S. Peltason: Jack never said anything about that to me, but I think Lance wanted the Pulitzer Prize or some kind of journalistic award. [Louis] Freedberg or whoever it was who had done it to David, had gotten an award and had a big promotion. I think it was all just part of the Woodward-Bernstein thing. Investigative journalism made big names in the Watergate era, and Woodward and Bernstein are now deans in their profession. They can write their own ticket. They can go anyplace they want and get any amount of money they want.

Lance Williams also got some kind of award or recognition; he got praised by his newspaper. I thought maybe somebody would say, "This isn't cricket. It's like stealing," but he was commended for "tearing the veil of secrecy from the Office of the President."

Lage: Do you have anything to say about living at Blake House and living up here in the Bay Area, after having lived in Irvine?

S. Peltason: Oh, just that we loved it. We like the weather in southern California better, but Blake House is beautiful. I was fond of the gardeners; they were so nice to us. The gardens are Berkeley's and the house belongs to the Office of the President--the regents ultimately own it all, of course--so the gardeners didn't work for us, but they were always marvelous to us. They'd always give me any special pot of orchids, or anything I wanted grown; they'd put it in the greenhouse and try to grow it. They always asked if we were going to be using the grounds, so they'd specially clean up or fix up if we

were going to have a party there on the weekend or anytime. They were so kind and so friendly, really wonderful people.

And Carolyn, I adored. I still adore her. The people in the accounting office managed the books for the house, and I was really not that aware of them, but I was very close to the people who worked in the house. Leslie was part of our family for that few years. Sean, who's now there half-time, was there with us at the end after Leslie left. It was really a close family living there. At first the house seemed very big and kind of bare and rattly-around-in-it, but as soon as we got some of our own stuff we both felt very much at home there.

And that beautiful view--the gardens are beautiful, and it's such a lovely view. It's a beautiful house, I think. It was leaking all over the place, and you could see this enormous crack when you went down and looked under where the front hallway is. We saw it, and I called the guy who had been the architect, who had done the rehab on it in '68, and he said, "Oh, well, it's all right. It's probably--." Then I heard that when they redid all that they were told that it wasn't all right, that that crack ought to be fixed. It looked like the house was going to collapse.

Lage: Fall right in.

S. Peltason: Go down. There were a lot of leaks, and I did worry then that we were not being proper stewards, because we had the feeling that studs were rotting out, but we had no choice.

Lage: It wasn't the time to spend money.

S. Peltason: No, but living in it, we loved it. And we love the Bay Area. We have all our political science friends at Berkeley, who were wonderful. The Ranneys and the Wolfingers had a place up in the Pope Valley, and when things got bad, like the day that story broke--.

Lance and everybody else were stirring up feelings against the institution that could be damaging. It didn't matter for us so much. It hurt Jack, but it wouldn't have mattered in his career--by that time Jack was seventy-two or seventy-three--but it could do great damage to the university. I mean, when the university would try to get money from the legislature after that flap, if the legislators were mad, they'd say, "If you want this to go through, do this," or "You won't get your appropriation unless you don't raise fees--." All kinds of blackmail that they engaged in, all the time!

I don't know. I guess I wouldn't have wanted Jack to accuse them of blackmail; that wouldn't be too smart! But, instead of immediately apologizing to Lockyer and others, I wanted him to go a little on the offensive and say, "This is no big deal. You say worse things about UC administration all the time. We just strongly disagreed with your action on Regent Lee, but of course you had the right to take that action, and we had the right to be mad about it."

**The Impact of the Affirmative Action Controversy on Jack: "He Was Very Much Beaten Down"**

Lage: I want to make sure we discuss retirement, but I don't want to miss something important. Do you have anything to say about that whole affirmative action episode and how Jack reacted to it, as you saw it?

S. Peltason: He was very much beaten down. I don't remember exactly when all that came up. Maybe he had decided to retire prior to the affirmative action episode. All through that business with the press and with Lance Williams, he was saying, "Okay, this is it. Three years." Jack felt he had to tell the regents a year ahead, and so he thought he had to have his mind made up by October of '94. If he was going to quit, the three years would be October '95.

Howard [Leach] and Meredith [Khachigian], his past chair and his present chair of the regents, both then said the same thing, that they didn't need that much lead time. He wanted to be sure they had another president in office before he left, and not have to have an interim, and he thought maybe a year was a fair time to give them.

They both said no. They got him to hold off on his announcement until January, I think. I think Meredith would really have liked it if he had stayed on. She was the one who was chairman of the regents when the job was offered to him. The regents were criticized by some for giving him the job. There were several references in the paper to giving the job to an old person, and, "What we need is someone younger and with more energy." I think Meredith would have been pleased if he had continued to govern with the energy that she knew he had, and the choice would have been vindicated.

That accusation of him as having no energy was always kind of an amazing thing because, as Nancy Nakayama said, in the office Jack ran them all ragged.

Lage: I can believe it!

S. Peltason: Jack didn't really have the freedom to follow up on any of his new, creative, clever ideas, because he was always managing crises and that affirmative action controversy was just the last in a long string. I know in January and February Ward was saying he was going to bring the issue up before the Board of Regents. Jack said, "Just put it off until after November."

Ward said maybe he'd hold off until after the next election, and then he said, "No, this has to be now. It is the proper thing." He made all the counterarguments, to fight it out on the University of California Board of Regents, where it should be, which Jack

disagreed with completely. But it was brought up at the July meeting amid great hoopla--Jesse Jackson and all the rest of the circus.

But Jack was so tired and so anxious to just go back home, and we hadn't had time. We couldn't really plan reunions with our children because he just couldn't get away that much. Theoretically, he had a month's vacation, but in practice we thought we had to take a week here and a few days there. We couldn't really go away and refresh for a month. Or he thought he couldn't. Maybe he could have.

### Retirement

Lage: Has retirement been nice?

S. Peltason: Yes, it has been, and we've had a new grandchild since retiring! Jack's still not free of deadlines. All those years--it's kind of amazing--for fifty years he revised those two textbooks. He did all that in the middle of really high-pressure times, all through the student unrest days in the sixties. He still had those deadlines. From 1952 on, he was still redoing the textbooks.

Then he became president of the Bren Foundation, which is not as high pressure, but it's not a nothing job. That's had its frustrations, too, trying to broker these gifts that Donald Bren wants to give to the campuses. He started talking again about really retiring--getting someone else to do the two texts--but then he gets scared. His co-authors finally, just a few months ago, found someone to take over for him *Government by the People*, so he's going to phase that out.

The night that it was all fixed, when David O'Brien agreed to do it--he's a great person; we thought it was a great coup to get him, he's a wonderful political scientist and a well-known one--Jack didn't sleep all night. "What have I done?" [laughter] All this time he's been saying that when he didn't have any other job, he would enjoy the text revision. He always said that he really liked keeping up with political science, and the texts gave him a reason. He's always read and kept up on all of the Supreme Court cases, and so forth. He didn't keep up with it as much as he would have if he had been teaching in the field, but for the textbook he kept up, knowing what had to be upgraded every time.

He has big files that he keeps all the time, and he's always looking for cartoons to illustrate something.

Lage: So it's kind of a fun retirement activity.

S. Peltason: That's what we thought, you know and then he started saying last year, "I just don't --." I said, "Okay." So he's given away both books now. It took him a while to find

someone to take *Understanding the Constitution*<sup>1</sup>, but he did. The other book is a much bigger deal, the *Government by the People* one. It's just incredible. I don't know if there's any other textbook that has been number one in its field for fifty years.

Lage: That's really amazing.

S. Peltason: It's amazing. So now that he's giving it up, he's beginning to have this panicked feeling of, "What am I going to do?" Because I don't think the job with Donald will last much longer. Donald really wanted Jack to help him set up his foundation, and it's going now. There's another good man there, who is the obvious one to take over. So I don't know.

Now, Jack does panic. He's certainly a Type A personality, and he panics about not having enough to do. I ask, "Do you want to write a book?" "No, I don't want to write a book." He's on a lot of volunteer boards. He's on the United Way board and the UCI Barclay Theatre board. But they're all so expensive. I mean, every time he joins another board I say, "Aren't those board members supposed to give \$5,000 a year?" We've gone from boards that pay us, to us paying them. He's off the TIAA board and most of the ones that pay him. We did a good job of investing our money, but really we wanted to help our children, and they needed our help over the years. I mean, they didn't need it to survive, but they needed it to prosper in many ways, and we want all the grandchildren to feel they can go to school wherever they want to. We don't want lack of money to keep them from going to Ivy League schools, if that's where they want to go. We want to help the education of all seven.

Despite the fact that we gave up all of the deferred compensation that's given to most administrators, it seems like we got a lot of money. It seemed to me we had no complaints. We were generously paid all along in our career, but we don't have a lot left at the end, considering we have seven grandchildren we want to get through school. So he's been a little bit nervous about just giving up everything, because you don't know how long you are going to live. He worked so long that we thought, "Well, now, we're not going to have any problems," but then you keep reading about these people who live till they're ninety-eight and one hundred. Our money will run out before then, and our children really can't afford to take care of us.

Lage: Well, they'll come up with it somehow. Another textbook seems in order.

S. Peltason: Right. I keep thinking he has something else that he wants to say. He doesn't want to write about higher education. He said, "It's the dumbest literature on the whole." I said, "Maybe you can do something good." He said, "There isn't anything smart to say about higher education administration." He doesn't think it's a subject worth writing about, for him, anyway.

---

<sup>1</sup>Edwin S. Corwin and J.W. Peltason (New York: W. Sloane Assoc., 1949)

Lage: Anything else about family or your own retirement?

S. Peltason: No.

Lage: You've had really an unofficial role at UC Irvine, it seems, when you went back. Do they call on you for fundraising events?

S. Peltason: Oh, no, not much. Jack's involved, helps with a lot, and we go to things when we're invited.

Lage: You don't have to host them.

S. Peltason: No, I don't host them. This was a nice thing. That money that we didn't spend, you know, the deferred compensation that we didn't take. We gave it back to the university to be used for students, and then they asked us where we wanted to donate it. The political science department at UCI has just started a Center for the Study of Democracy, and Jack decided that was a good place to put the money, to get it started. So they had this seed money for the new program--I think it was about three-hundred thousand dollars--this Center for the Study of Democracy.

We thought the center was an appropriate thing for Jack since it's about as close to religion as he has, I think, democracy.

Lage: So it's a new center, set up for the study of democracy.

S. Peltason: Yes.

Lage: Well, if there's nothing else, I want to thank you very much for all of your time. You offer an important perspective to the history of the university.

Transcriber: Rex Adams, Sara Diamond

Editor: Esther Ehrlich

Final Typist: Steve Stine



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## APPENDIX--Suzanne Toll Peltason

A.	Sue Young's Proposal for Employee Status for Spouses of Chancellors and the President, March, 19, 1987	91
B.	Policy on Associates of the President/Chancellor, October 6, 1987	95
C.	Peltason's Holiday Card, 1994	inside back cover





March 19, 1987

TO: President David Gardner

FROM: Sue Young, representing the U.C.  
chancellors/president's spouses.

RE: Request for a Title and Employee Status for the Spouse of  
the Chancellors/President.

Background:

On February 19, 1987, the spouses of the U.C. chancellors met in Santa Barbara to discuss their status within the university. Also present was the spouse of the president. These were: Jean Aldrich (Santa Barbara), Rita Atkinson (San Diego), Therese Heyman (Berkeley), Joan Hullar (Riverside), Patricia Krevans (San Francisco), Mary Meyer (Davis), Susie Peltason (Irvine), Karen Sinsheimer (Santa Cruz), Sue Young (Los Angeles), and Libby Gardner (Universitywide).

Unanimously we agreed that we should have a university title. The title of "Associate of the Chancellor/President for University Relations" was acceptable to all. I was directed by those present to pursue formally the securing of this official title, along with appropriate employee benefits.

At the present time, the spouse of the Chancellor/President has no employee rights but has many employee obligations, among which are hiring, firing, supervising, and evaluating university employees who work under the direction of the spouse. Among the employee benefits which all U.C. employees have, but the chancellor/president's spouse does not are:

- Business Travel Accident Insurance
- Death Benefits
- Worker's Compensation
- Library Privilege Card
- Reduced Fee for Enrollment in Regular and Most  
University Extension Classes
- University Credit Union Optional Membership

Proposal:

The status of chancellors'/president's spouses and their relationship to other U.C. employees are of great concern to us, and after much thought and discussion, we arrived at this proposal.

You will note that no mention is made of a salary. Our concern here is to legitimize our positions, and in the process to guarantee us some of the benefits received by all university employees.

WE PROPOSE FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION THE FOLLOWING:

THAT THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA BESTOW  
AN OFFICIAL TITLE ON THE SPOUSES OF  
CHANCELLORS/PRESIDENT.

THAT ALONG WITH THIS TITLE GO APPROPRIATE  
EMPLOYEE BENEFITS WHICH ACCRUE TO ALL  
EMPLOYEES OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA.

Attached is a job description for the spouse of the  
chancellor/president.

---

Sue Young, UCLA

March 19, 1987

JOB DESCRIPTION

for

Associate of the Chancellor/President for University Relations  
Role

Represent the spousal half of the partnership involved when a married person assumes the chancellorship of a U.C. campus.

Reflect the personal image agreed upon by the partnership.

Participate as a public figure in events involving the partners, as agreed by them.

Interact socially with other university CEOs and spouses at statewide, national, and international levels as a partner of the chancellor/president.

As a spouse, maintain a good relationship with the U.C. Regents, the President, chancellors, and their spouses.

When appropriate to the partnership goals, take a leadership role or participate in campus and community activities.

When necessary and appropriate, travel with the chancellor/president in an official capacity as a representative of the university to meetings, alumni events, fund-raising activities, conferences, etc.

Co-host at non-residence events such as football brunches, special luncheons and dinners held in restaurants, alumni get-togethers in other cities or states where the personal touch of the chancellor/president and spouse is required.

Serve as a role model to all who respect and admire the position of chancellor/president's spouse.

Optional Duties

Establish and maintain a residence, whether personal, official, or both, including interior decoration and major purchases on behalf of the university.

Supervise university employees necessary to maintaining the residence used for official entertaining.

- At some time or another, in the capacity as supervisor, interview, hire, fire, evaluate, promote, reclassify, instruct, reprimand, commend, approve vacation leaves, sign attendance forms, or counsel these employees.
- Plan, supervise, and host the entertaining deemed necessary in the residence by the partnership in carrying out the chancellor/president's social obligations.
- See that proper records are kept of all expenditures incurred in the process of maintaining the official residence and of entertaining at the residence on behalf of the university.
- See that proper records are kept of non-financial aspects of entertaining (e.g., reason for event, date, guest list, food served, etc.)
- Interact or direct others to interact with tradespeople necessary to maintenance and entertainment at the residence (e.g., caterers, plumbers, cleaning personnel, gardeners, florists, rental agencies, etc.).

## UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

BERKELEY • DAVIS • IRVINE • LOS ANGELES • RIVERSIDE • SAN DIEGO • SAN FRANCISCO



SANTA BARBARA • SANTA CRUZ

DAVID PIERPONT GARDNER  
PresidentOFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT  
BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA 94720

October 6, 1987

## CHANCELLORS

Dear Colleagues:

The enclosed Policy on Associate of the President/Chancellor is effective November 1, 1987. This Policy, which provides for appointment as Associate of the President/Chancellor, was developed to provide a means of recognizing significant contributions and services to the University made by a Chancellor's or President's spouse. Appointment to this title is without salary.

Implementing guidelines will be issued by Senior Vice President Brady.

Thank you for your advice and cooperation in developing this Policy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "David", written over the printed name.

David Pierpont Gardner

Enclosure

cc: Members, President's Cabinet  
Associate Vice President Catalano  
Associate Vice President Pastrone  
Assistant Vice President Levin  
Director Rogin  
Principal Officers of The Regents

## POLICY ON ASSOCIATE OF THE PRESIDENT/CHANCELLOR

Upon the recommendation of a Chancellor, the President may approve the appointment of the Chancellor's spouse as Associate of the Chancellor, and upon consultation with the Chairman of the Board of Regents, the President may authorize the appointment of the President's spouse as Associate of the President.

This designation is intended to reflect and to recognize the contributions and services to the University of those spouses when acting as official agents of the University and/or the President/Chancellor, e.g., at meetings, workshops, conferences, University and community activities, alumni and fund raising events, faculty/student/staff activities, and when hosting University events in an official capacity. This appointment also acknowledges the Associates' oversight responsibilities in planning and arranging many of the above functions and in the management of official University residences. This appointment is not automatic but is conditional on the spouse's being significantly involved in the activities and functions noted above. This appointment is without salary and does not convey employee status, other than as covered herein.

The following will be provided to the Associate of the President/Chancellor:

1. A University identification card will be issued which will provide access to University libraries and other University facilities, in accordance with campus procedures.
2. University-related travel expenses incurred while traveling as an Associate will be reimbursed according to established University policy and procedures.
3. The University will provide business travel insurance coverage, equivalent to that provided to paid University employees, for an Associate while traveling on University business.
4. The University will provide workers' compensation coverage for an injury arising out of the course and scope of the service performed as an Associate, in accordance with the California Workers' Compensation Act.
5. The University will provide defense and indemnification for an Associate with respect to claims resulting from acts or omissions in the service performed as an Associate, except when the action or failure to act resulted from actual fraud, corruption, or malice.

6. The University may provide an automobile allowance for use of a privately-owned vehicle, commensurate with the requirements of the Associate in the performance of University-related activities.
7. Business cards with the Associate title will be provided by the University.
8. The University will provide courtesy parking permits for use at University-owned facilities.

University of California  
Office of the President  
November 1, 1987

GUIDELINES FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POLICY ON  
ASSOCIATE OF THE PRESIDENT/CHANCELLOR

1. The title "Associate of the President/Chancellor" will be established and a title code assigned by the Office of Employee Relations, Office of the President.
2. To receive authorization for the appointment of a Chancellor's spouse as Associate of the Chancellor, the Chancellor shall submit a written request to the President. If approved, the President shall authorize use of the title in a letter to the Chancellor.
3. After consultation with the Chairman of the Board of Regents, the President may authorize use of the title Associate of the President.
4. Upon authorization, the Office of the Chancellor (or President) shall initiate a Personnel Action Form (PAF).
5. A University identification card will be issued in accordance with campus procedures.
6. Access to University libraries and other University facilities will be provided in accordance with campus procedures.
7. Reimbursement for University-related travel expenses will be provided in accordance with established University travel policy and procedures. Costs of travel expenses shall be charged to campus unrestricted (non-State) funds.
8. The Office of the President, Risk Management, will modify the University's business travel insurance contract so that coverage equivalent to that provided to paid University employees is provided for an Associate while traveling on University business.
9. Workers' compensation coverage is extended to cover an injury arising out of the course and scope of the service performed as an Associate.



10. Indemnification coverage is extended to provide for the defense and indemnification of an Associate with respect to claims resulting from acts or omissions in the service performed as an Associate, except when the action or failure to act resulted from actual fraud, corruption, or malice.
11. An automobile allowance not to exceed the amount allowed in University automobile policy may be provided for use of a privately-owned vehicle. Campuses shall fund the allowance using unrestricted funds. All costs of operation and maintenance of the vehicle, including the cost of insurance, shall be the responsibility of the owner. Mileage records indicating personal and University business usage shall be maintained by the Associate and submitted to the campus accounting officer for tax reporting purposes. Any portion of the allowance that exceeds operating cost for University business usage is considered taxable income and is subject to reporting in accordance with existing income tax law requirements. A sample reporting form and instructions are attached.
12. Business cards will be provided by the campus. The cost of business cards shall be paid by campus unrestricted funds.
13. The President will issue courtesy parking permits for use by the Associate at University-owned facilities.

## UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

Campus or Location

Date \_\_\_\_\_

TO: Accounting Office

Certification of Automobile Expense/Mileage on Official University Business  
under the University Policy on Associate of the President/Chancellor.

I hereby certify that for the month ended \_\_\_\_\_, 19\_\_\_\_, I

Cost (a) incurred \$ \_\_\_\_\_ in expenses to operate my personal automobile for official University business, and that I will maintain the substantiating records of the costs to operate the vehicle in support of the amount given above in the manner and for the period prescribed by law.

OR

Mileage (b) drove \_\_\_\_\_ miles in my personal automobile for official University business.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

If item (a) is filled out, the amount given will be deducted from the monthly allowance and the balance, if any, will be subject to information reporting if the total at year end is \$600 or more.

If item (b) is filled out, the mileage given will be used to compute the amount of the Associate's use of a personal automobile on official University business, using the IRS optional mileage rate. The amount thus computed will be deducted from the monthly allowance and the balance, if any, will be subject to information reporting if the total at year end is \$600 or more.

## TAX CONSIDERATIONS

## Cash Allowance Provided to Associate of the President/Chancellor

Under present Federal and State tax laws and regulations, any portion of the allowance not used for official business is subject to information reporting to taxing authorities\*. Commuting is considered personal use. The Associate must report business use to the Accounting Office. If no reporting is made, the entire allowance will be treated as personal income.

The reporting can be done either of two ways, as follows:

- 1) Report the actual cost to operate the Associate's personal automobile used for University business (paragraph (a) of the attached form), or
- 2) Report mileage only, in which case the IRS optional, standard mileage rate\*\* will be used to compute the amount of business expense (paragraph (b) of the attached form).

The Accounting Office will deduct the amount of business use from the allowance and the balance, if any, will be subject to information reporting.

---

\*For total annual amount of \$600 or more.

\*\*Presently 21 cents per mile for the first 15,000 miles and 11 cents per mile after the first 15,000 miles.



April 2002

## INTERVIEWS ON THE HISTORY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

Documenting the history of the University of California has been a responsibility of the Regional Oral History Office since the Office was established in 1954. Oral history memoirs with University-related persons are listed below. They have been underwritten by the UC Berkeley Foundation, the Chancellor's Office, University departments, or by extramural funding for special projects. The oral histories, both tapes and transcripts, are open to scholarly use in The Bancroft Library. Bound, indexed copies of the transcripts are available at cost to manuscript libraries.

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